わがままちえちゃん
Wagamama Chiechan
志村貴子
by Takako Shimura
BEAM COMIX
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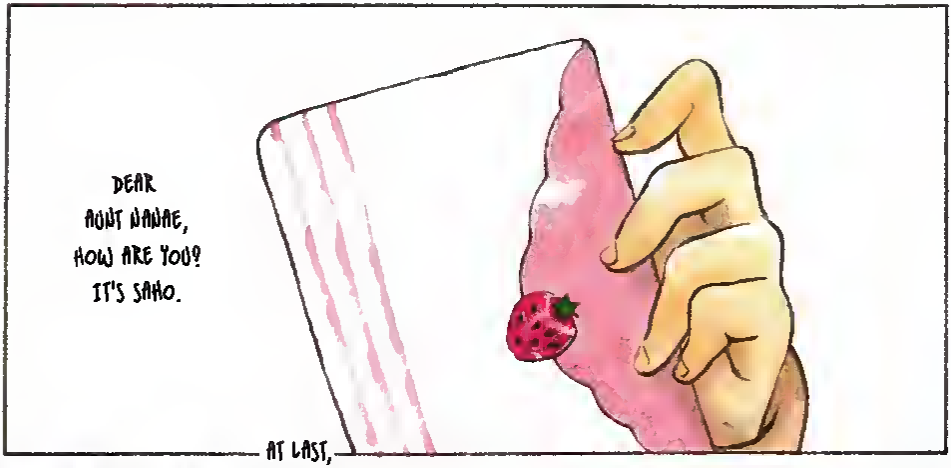
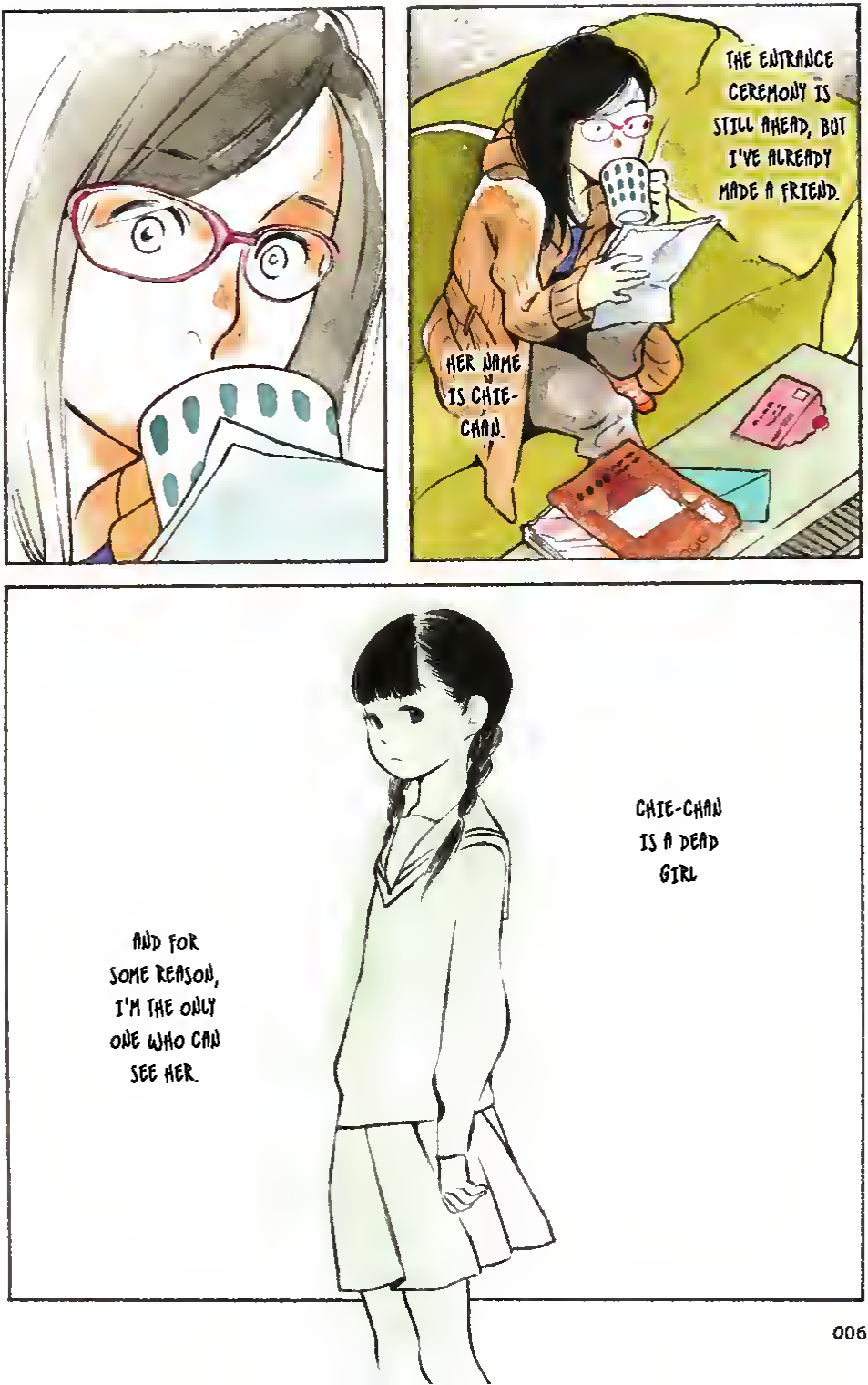
志村貴子
9784047303157
1920979006805
ISBN978-4-04-730315-7
C0979 ¥680E
定価 本体680円 +税
発行：株式会社KADOKAWA
KADOKAWA
enterbrain


DEAR
AUNT NANAE,
HOW ARE YOU?
IT'S SAHO.

AT LAST,
I'M GOING
TO BE A
MIDDLE
SCHOOLER.
BEING
SEPARATED
FROM MY
FRIENDS
WILL BE
LONELY.
OH!

WHEN I START
CLUB ACTIVITIES,
EVERY DAY WILL
BE EXHAUSTING,
AND OUR TIME
TO PLAY MIGHT
DISAPPEAR.
THEN I THINK,
I'LL HAVE TO
LEAVE THE HOUSE
EARLY EVERYDAY,
AND HOMEWORK
WILL SOON GET
DIFFICULT...
I TOLD THEM
WE COULD MEET UP
AGAIN ANY TIME,
BUT...

CHAPTER 1


THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY IS STILL AHEAD, BUT I'VE ALREADY MADE A FRIEND.
HER NAME IS CHIE-CHAN.
CHIE-CHAN IS A DEAD GIRL
AND FOR SOME REASON, I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SEE HER.

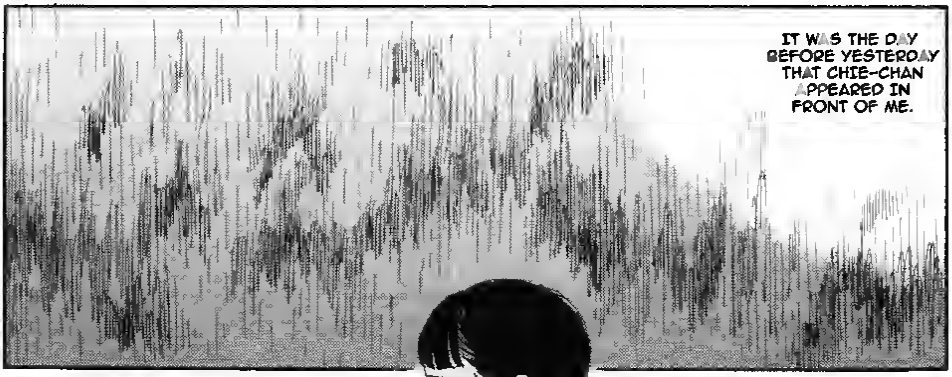
塙
HANAWA
IT'S JUST AS WONDERFUL AS I'D IMAGINED.
SAHO MADE THE DECISION TO GO ALL BY HERSELF, YOU KNOW.
I DIDN'T EVEN COERCE HER AT ALL!
HEY!
ISN'T THAT GREAT? IT'S FATE, DON'T YOU THINK?
YOU'RE CERTAINLY EXCITED, AREN'T YOU?
WELL, I SUPPOSE IT WOULD BE EXCITING FOR YOUR DAUGHTER TO ATTEND YOUR ALMA MATER.
I'M HOME!
OH!
SAHO!
YOUR UNIFORM CAME!

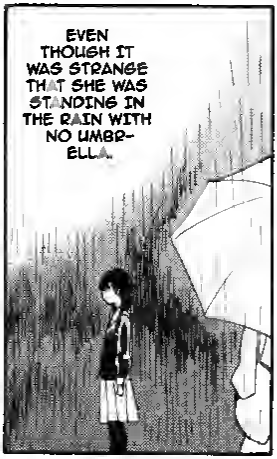
I TOLD YOU SHE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SEE ME
BUT SHE HAS A SIXTH SENSE! EVERYONE SAYS SO!
I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I?
HEY, COME ON!
HURRY UP AND TRY IT ON FOR GRANDMA!
WHOA!

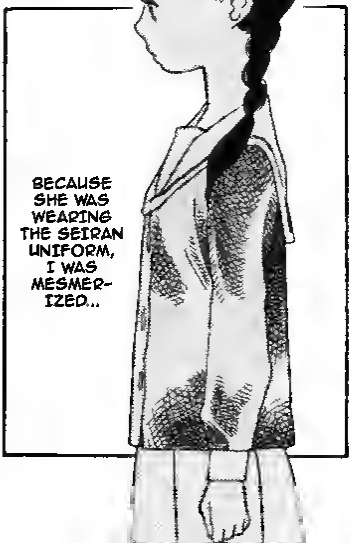
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING BEFORE IN THE PAST!
BUT ANYWAY, I'M SURPRISED I HAVE A SIXTH SENSE!
SAHO!
KNOCK
KNOCK
WHAT GRADE ARE YOU IN, CHIE-CHAN?
I WONDER IF WE'RE ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH NOW THAT I'VE BEEN ACCEPTED TO SEIRAN ACADEMY..?
SORRY!
I GOT REALLY INTO TALKING TO THE RADIO.
HUH!?
HAVE YOU BEEN TALKING TO SOMEONE IN THERE?
Y-YES..?

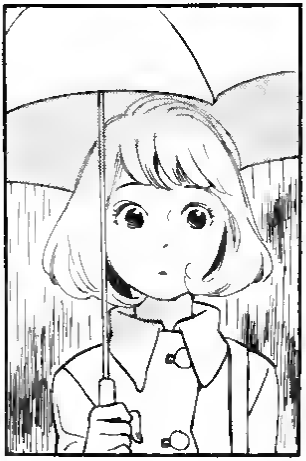
I WONDER IF THIS IS HER FATHER'S DOING...
DIDN'T WE AGREE TO GET HER ONE AFTER THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY?
HUH?
OKAY, SERIOUSLY, YOU DIDN'T SECRETLY BUY HER A PHONE, DID YOU?

SIGH
GRANDMA IS ALWAYS GETTING WORKED UP TALKING TO THE TV, RIGHT?
GOOD-NIGHT!
YOU'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH TO BE DOING THAT, THOUGH!
GEEZ


IT WAS THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY THAT CHIE-CHAN APPEARED IN FRONT OF ME.


EVEN THOUGH IT WAS STRANGE THAT SHE WAS STANDING IN THE RAIN WITH NO UMBRELLA.


BECAUSE SHE WAS WEARING THE SEIRAN UNIFORM, I WAS MESMERIZED..



I LIKED SCARY STORIES.

ON SCHOOL TRIPS, WE'D GET ALL EXCITED TRADING THEM BEFORE BED.

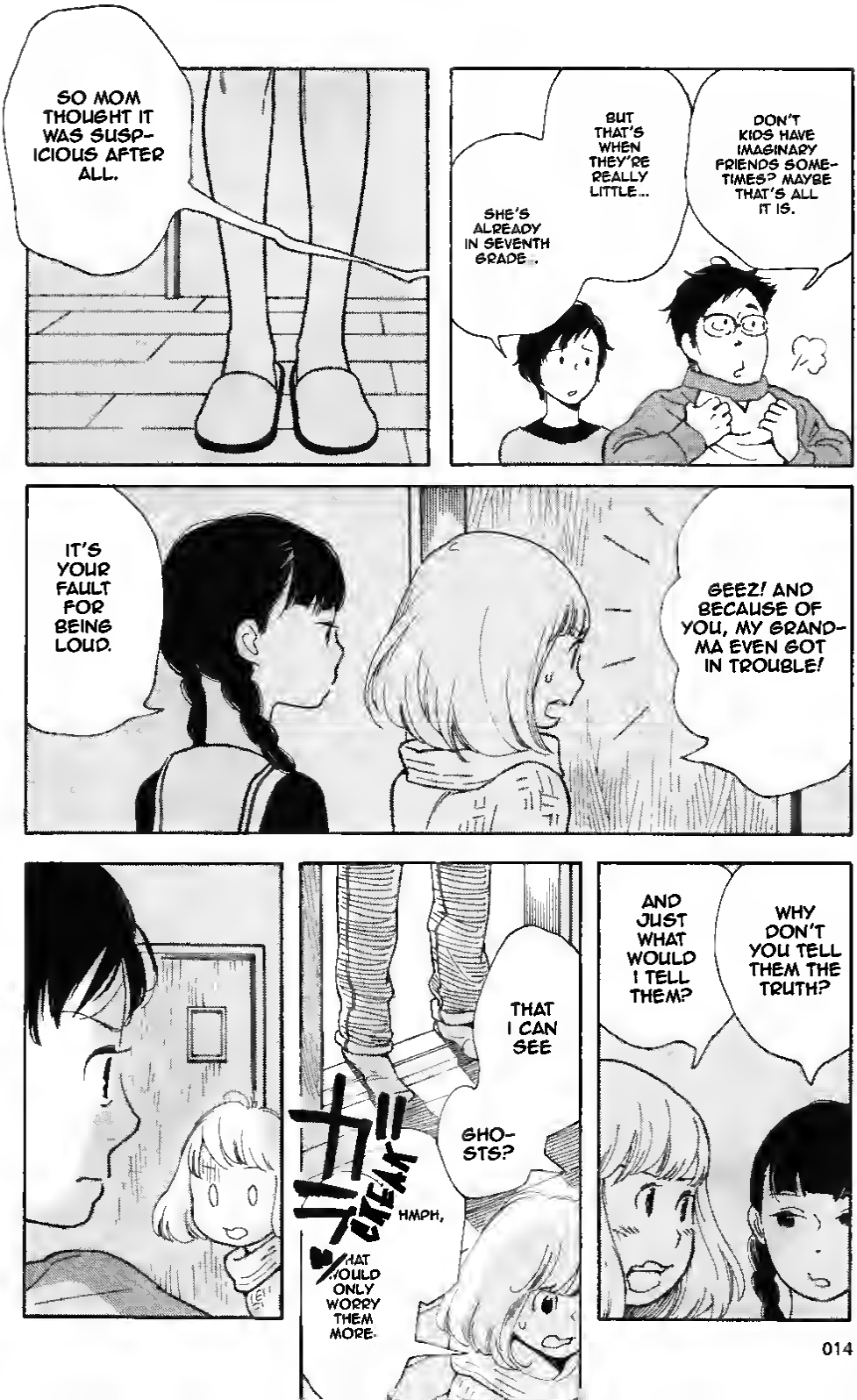
THERE WAS A PART OF ME THAT BELIEVED THEM, AND A PART OF ME THAT THOUGHT, "THIS IS PROBABLY MADE UP."

SCARY BUT EXCITING.

IT WAS THAT KIND OF FEELING.

THAT'S WHY...
CAN I COME OVER TO YOUR HOUSE?
SHE WAS WEARING A SEIRAN UNIFORM.
BUT THERE WAS NOTHING SCARY ABOUT MEETING CHIE-CHAN.
I WONDER IF IT WAS BECAUSE SHE'S A GIRL MY AGE?
I'M HOME!
WELCOME BACK!
UNCONSCIOUSLY...
SURE...
OH-
WAS IT RAINING?
I WONDER IF IT WILL LET UP BEFORE YOUR FATHER GETS HOME.
DINNER WILL BE READY IN A FEW, SO HURRY AND WASH YOUR HANDS.

A CELL PHONE?
WELL, I DIDN'T BUY ONE FOR HER.
WEREN'T WE GOING TO WAIT UNTIL SHE STARTED MIDDLE SCHOOL?
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT ...
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT, THEN?
THERE HAVE BEEN MORE THAN A FEW TIMES I'VE HEARD HER TALKING ALONE IN HER ROOM.
DIDN'T SHE SAY IT WAS THE RADIO SHE WAS TALKING TO?
WELL, THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME, EITHER.
HUH?
AREN'T YOU ALWAYS DOING THAT, TOO?
TO THE TV...


SO MOM THOUGHT IT WAS SUSPICIOUS AFTER ALL.
SHE'S ALREADY IN SEVENTH GRADE...
BUT THAT'S WHEN THEY'RE REALLY LITTLE...
DON'T KIDS HAVE IMAGINARY FRIENDS SOMETIMES? MAYBE THAT'S ALL IT IS.
IT'S YOUR FAULT FOR BEING LOUD.
GEEZ! AND BECAUSE OF YOU, MY GRANDMA EVEN GOT IN TROUBLE!
AND JUST WHAT WOULD I TELL THEM?
WHY DON'T YOU TELL THEM THE TRUTH?
THAT I CAN SEE GHOSTS?
HMPH, THAT WOULD ONLY WORRY THEM MORE.

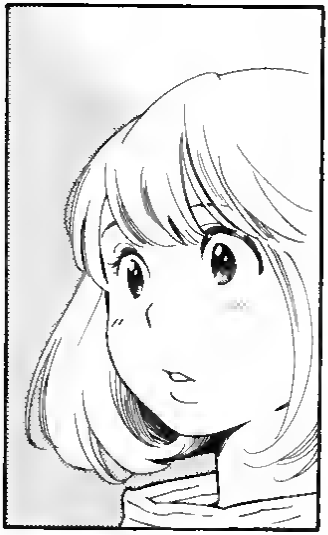
UM...
MOM, DAD...
I'VE BEEN ACTING WEIRD LATELY, SO...
YOU'VE PROBABLY FELT SOMETHING WAS STRANGE.
I'M STILL LOOKING FORWARD TO GETTING A PHONE.
ANYWAY, GRANDMA IS INNOCENT.
LATELY, I'VE KIND OF...
BEEN ABLE TO SEE A GHOST.
WHAT!?
HER NAME IS CHIE-CHAN.

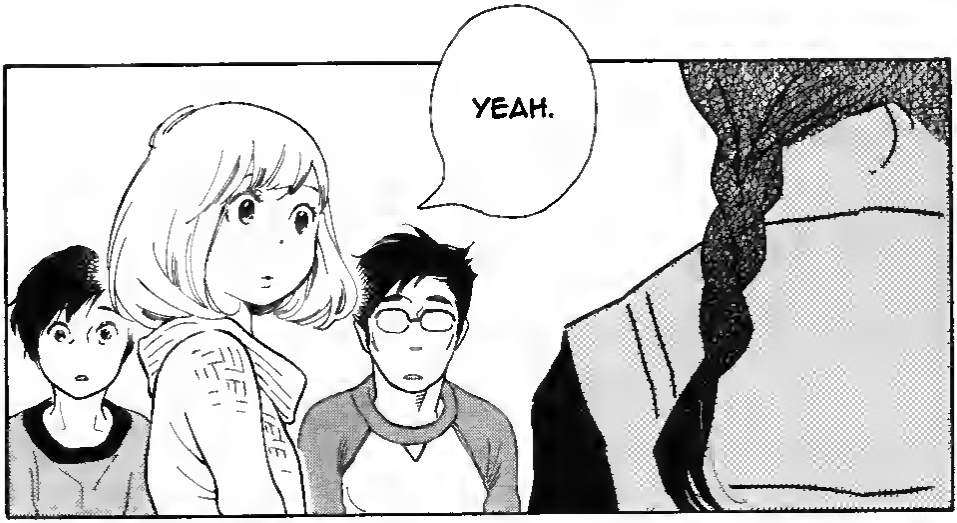
SHE'S A CUTE GIRL!
UM. SHE WEARS A SCHOOL UNIFORM, AND HAS BRAIDED HAIR.

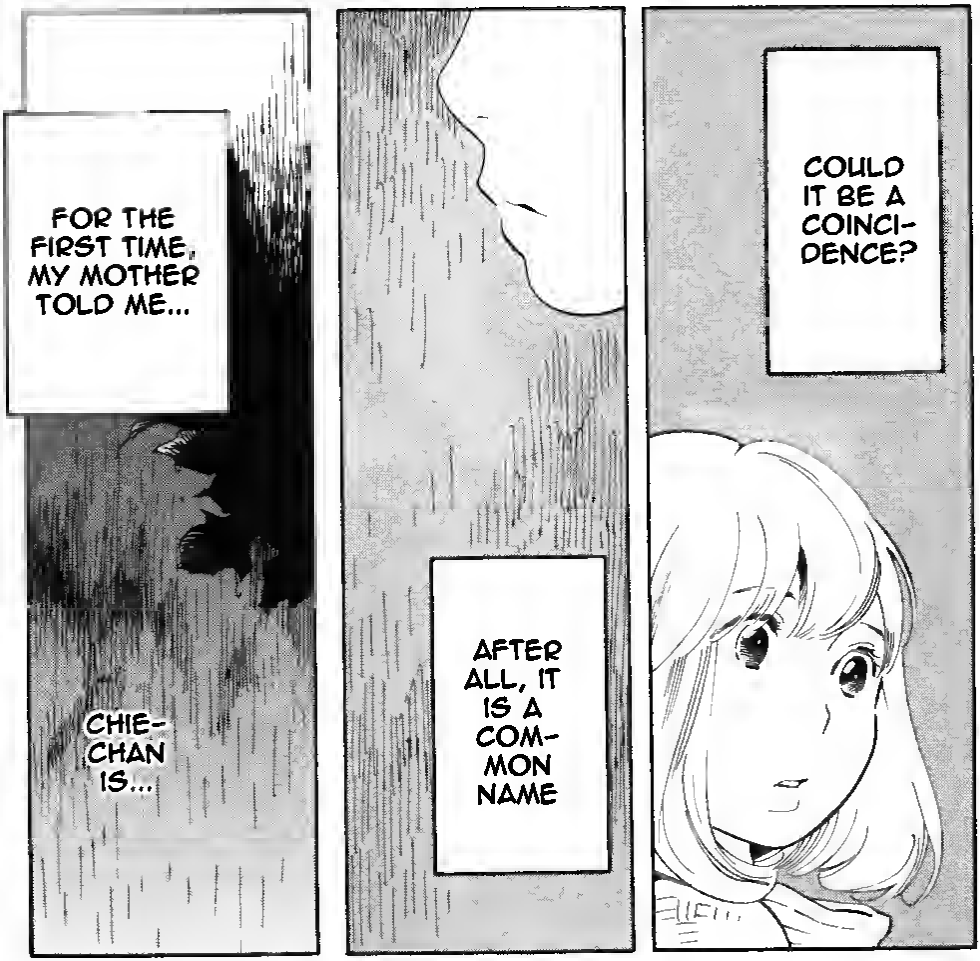
SHE'S NOT SCARY AT ALL OR ANYTHING, SO PLEASE DON'T BE WORRIED...

YOU SAID HER NAME IS CHIE?

CHIE ...

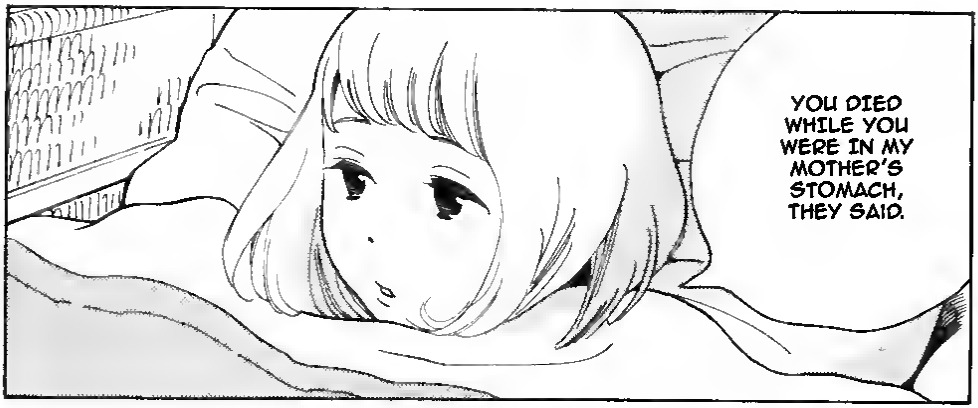



YEAH.

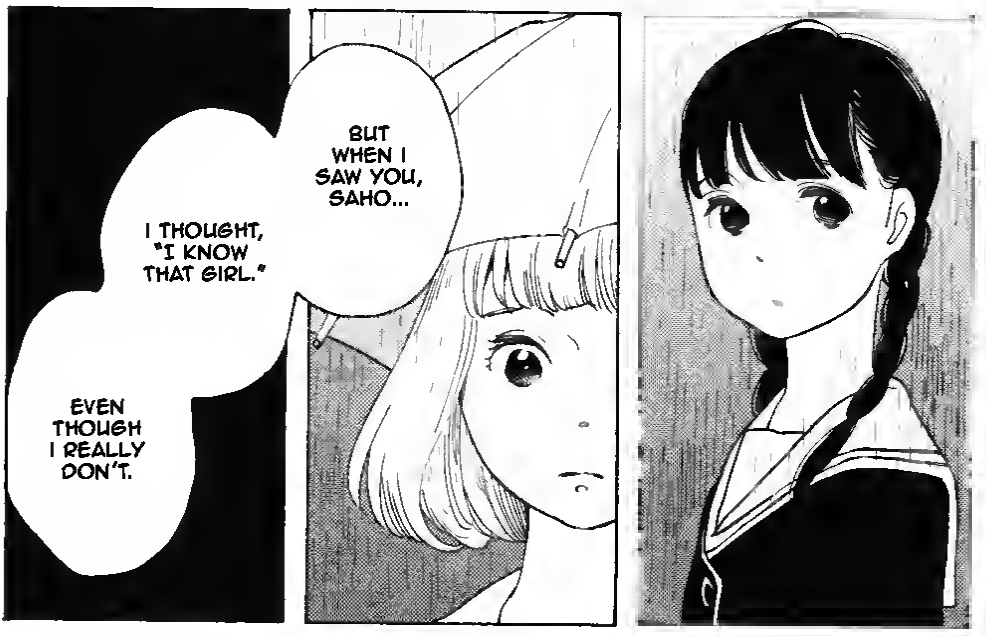

COULD IT BE A COINCI-DENCE?
AFTER ALL, IT IS A COM-MON NAME
FOR THE FIRST TIME, MY MOTHER TOLD ME...
CHIE-CHAN IS...

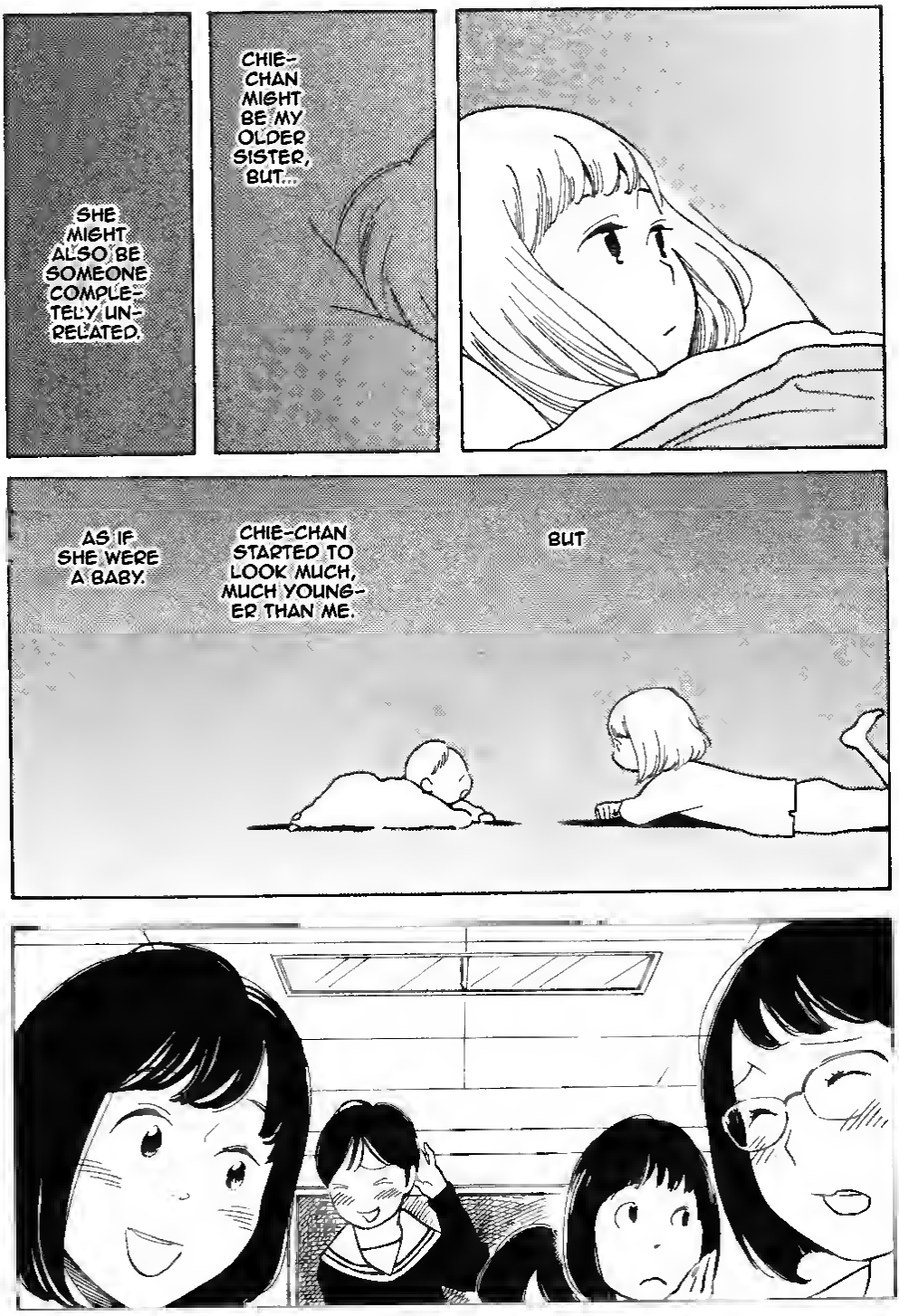
MY DEAD
OLDER SISTER.

CHAPTER 2

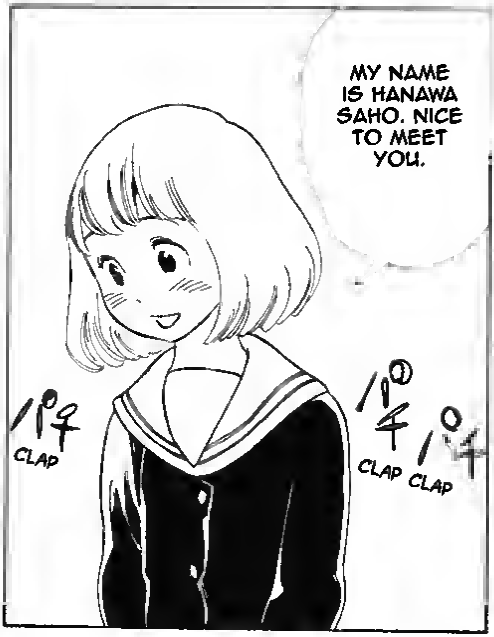

YOU DIED WHILE YOU WERE IN MY MOTHER'S STOMACH, THEY SAID.

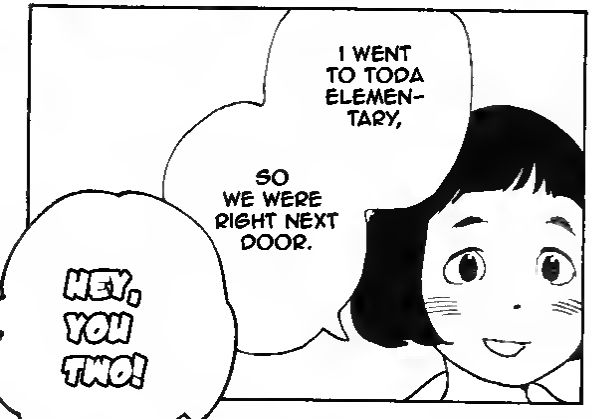
I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING.


BUT WHEN I SAW YOU, SAHO...
I THOUGHT, "I KNOW THAT GIRL."
EVEN THOUGH I REALLY DON'T.

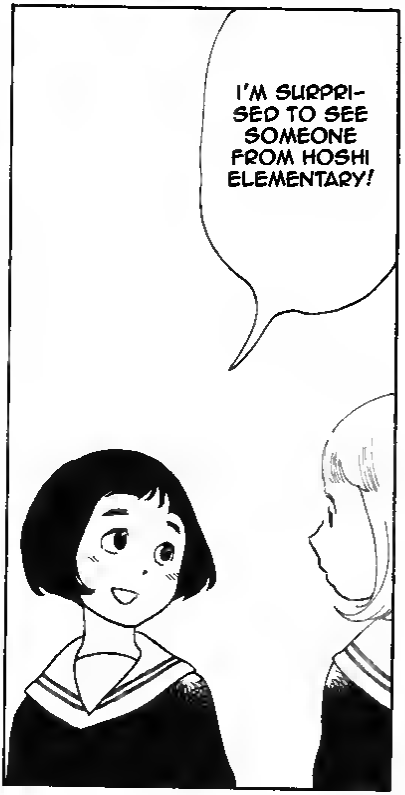

SHE MIGHT ALSO BE SOMEONE COMPLE-TELY UN-RELATED.
CHIE-CHAN MIGHT BE MY OLDER SISTER, BUT...
AS IF SHE WERE A BABY.
CHIE-CHAN STARTED TO LOOK MUCH, MUCH YOUNG-ER THAN ME.
BUT

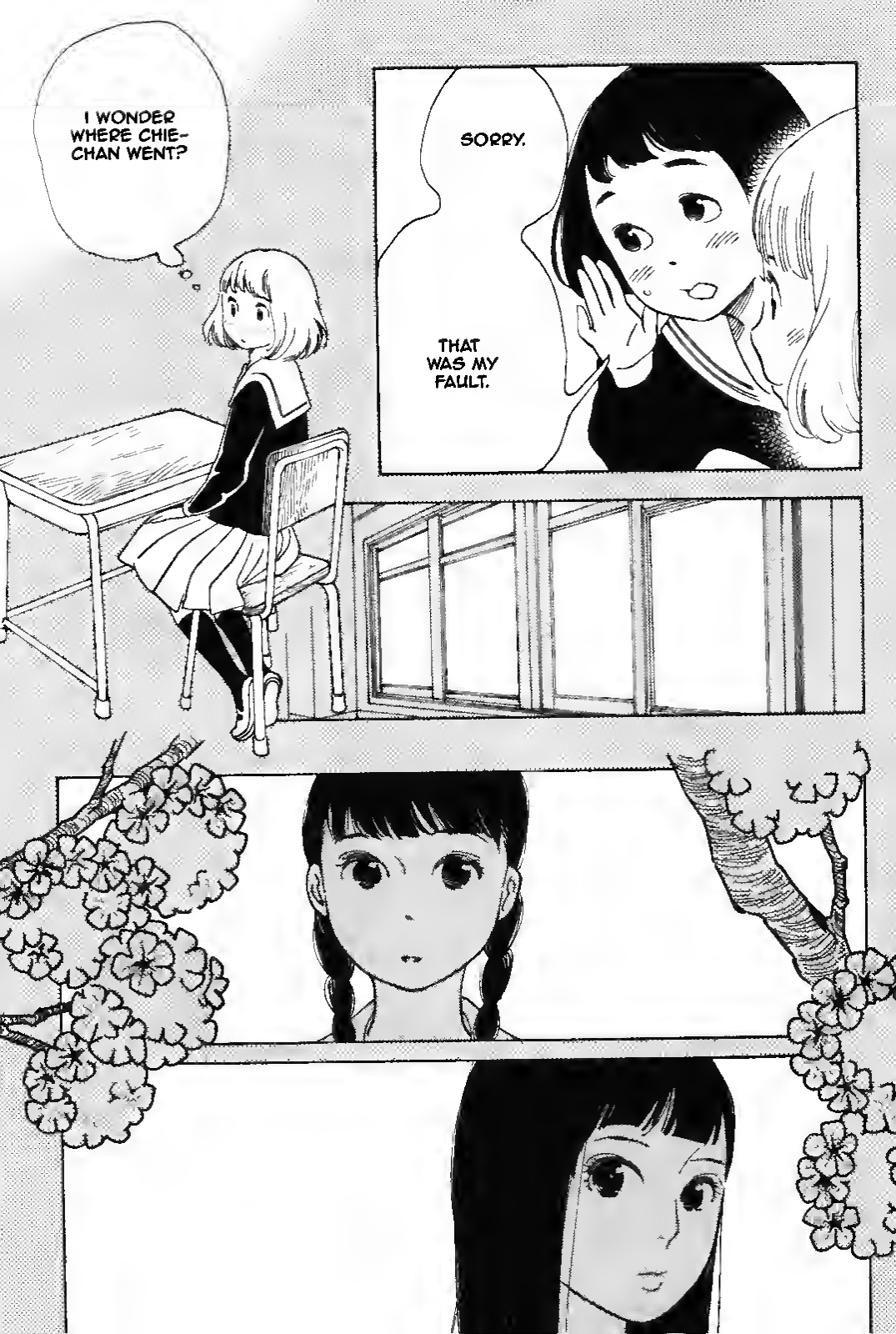
NEXT!
KACHUNK
カチャ


MY NAME IS HANAWA SAHO. NICE TO MEET YOU.
CLAP
CLAP CLAP

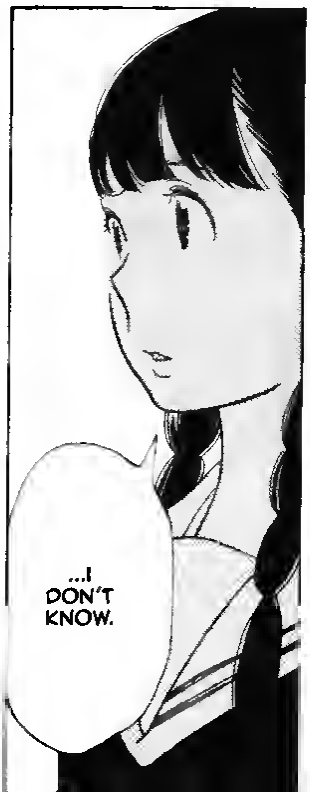

I WENT TO TODA ELEMENTARY,
SO WE WERE RIGHT NEXT DOOR.
HEY, YOU TWO!

LISTEN PROPERLY!
S-SORRY!


I'M SURPRISED TO SEE SOMEONE FROM HOSHI ELEMENTARY!


I WONDER WHERE CHIE-CHAN WENT?
SORRY.
THAT WAS MY FAULT.

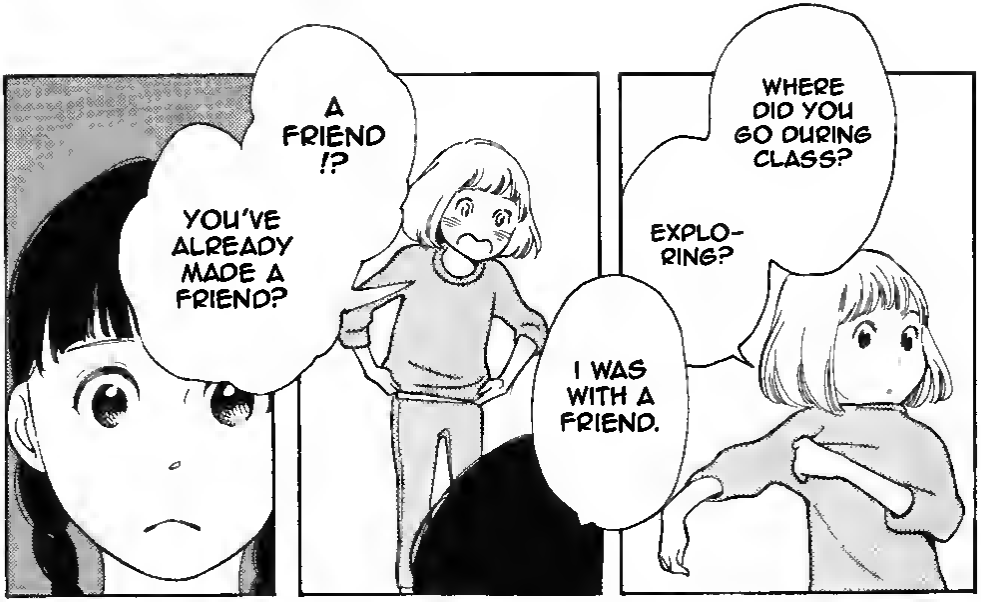
YOU'RE KIND OF STUPID, HUH?
I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND.

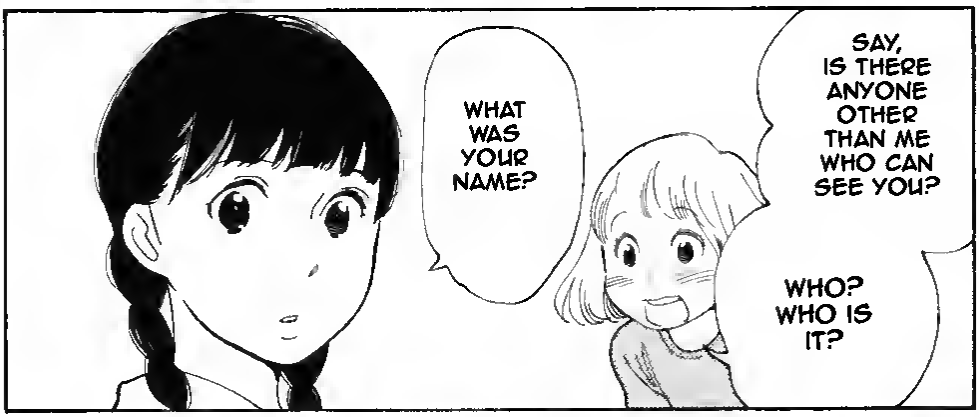

...I DON'T KNOW.

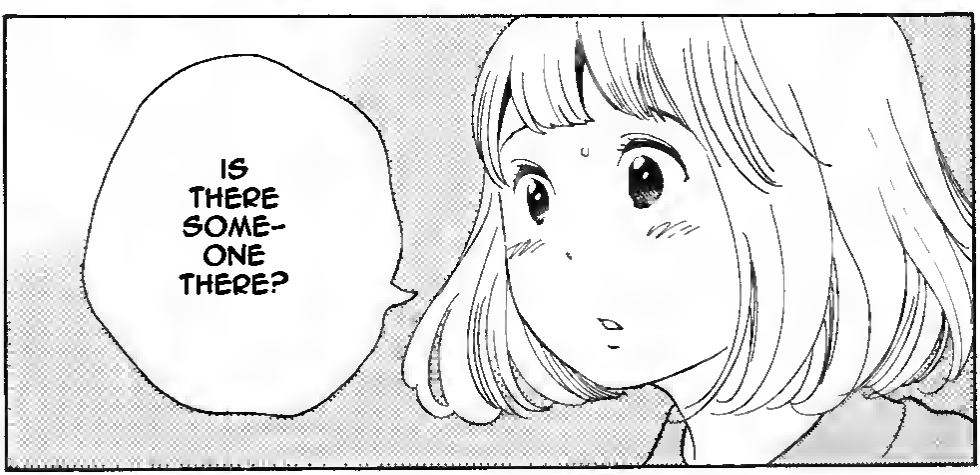
WHAT CLASS ARE YOU IN?

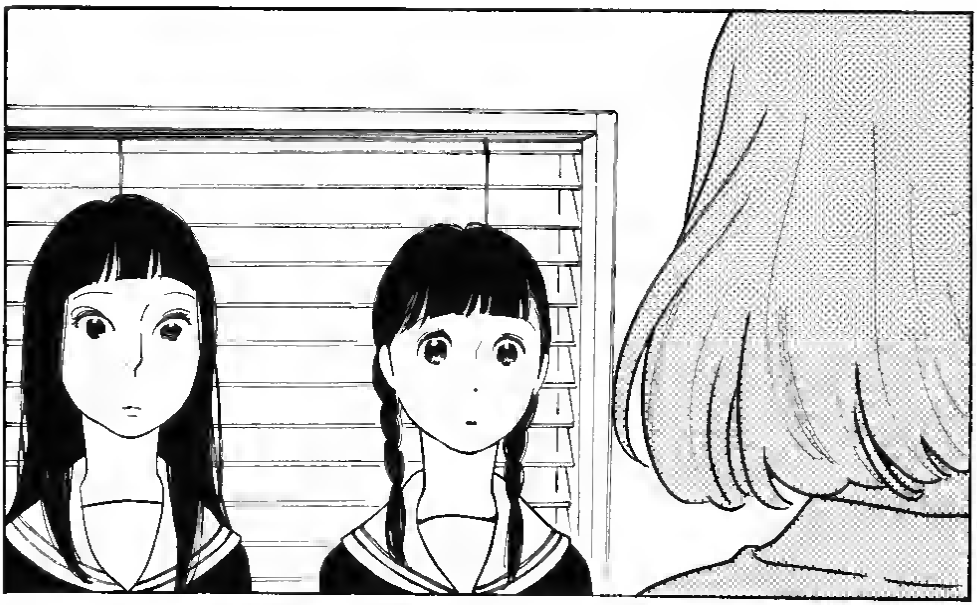
LET'S EAT LUNCH TOGETHER TOMOR-ROW!
STATION
OKAY! BYE BYE!
塙
HANAWA
WELCOME HOME!
HOW WAS SCHOOL?
MM...
IT WAS OKAY, I GUESS...

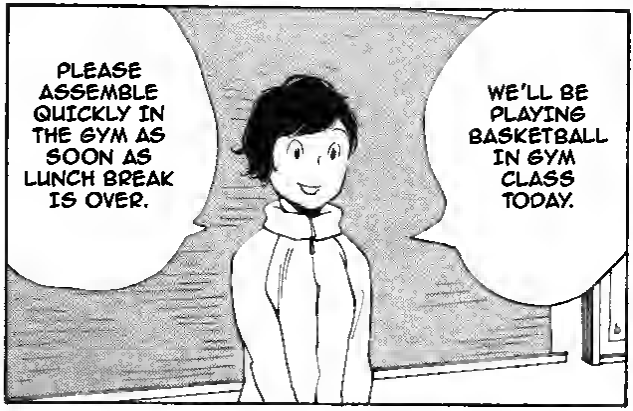
MOM DOESN'T TALK ABOUT CHIE-CHAN.
SHUT
IF I ASKED, SHE WOULD PROBABLY TELL ME ABOUT HER, BUT...
GIVEN THE CIRCUM-STANCES, I CAN'T BRING MY-SELF TO ASK.
WHOA!
WHEN DID YOU GET HOME?

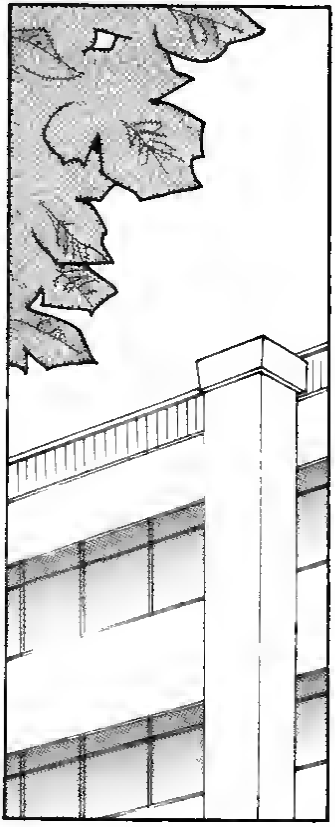

WHERE DID YOU GO DURING CLASS?
EXPLO-RING?
I WAS WITH A FRIEND.
A FRIEND !?
YOU'VE ALREADY MADE A FRIEND?

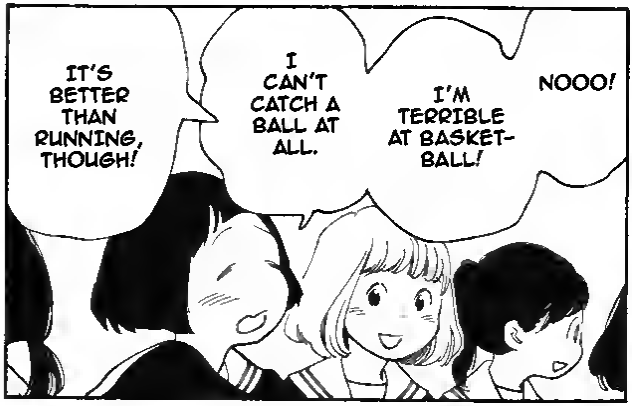

SAY, IS THERE ANYONE OTHER THAN ME WHO CAN SEE YOU?
WHAT WAS YOUR NAME?
WHO? WHO IS IT?


IS THERE SOME-ONE THERE?



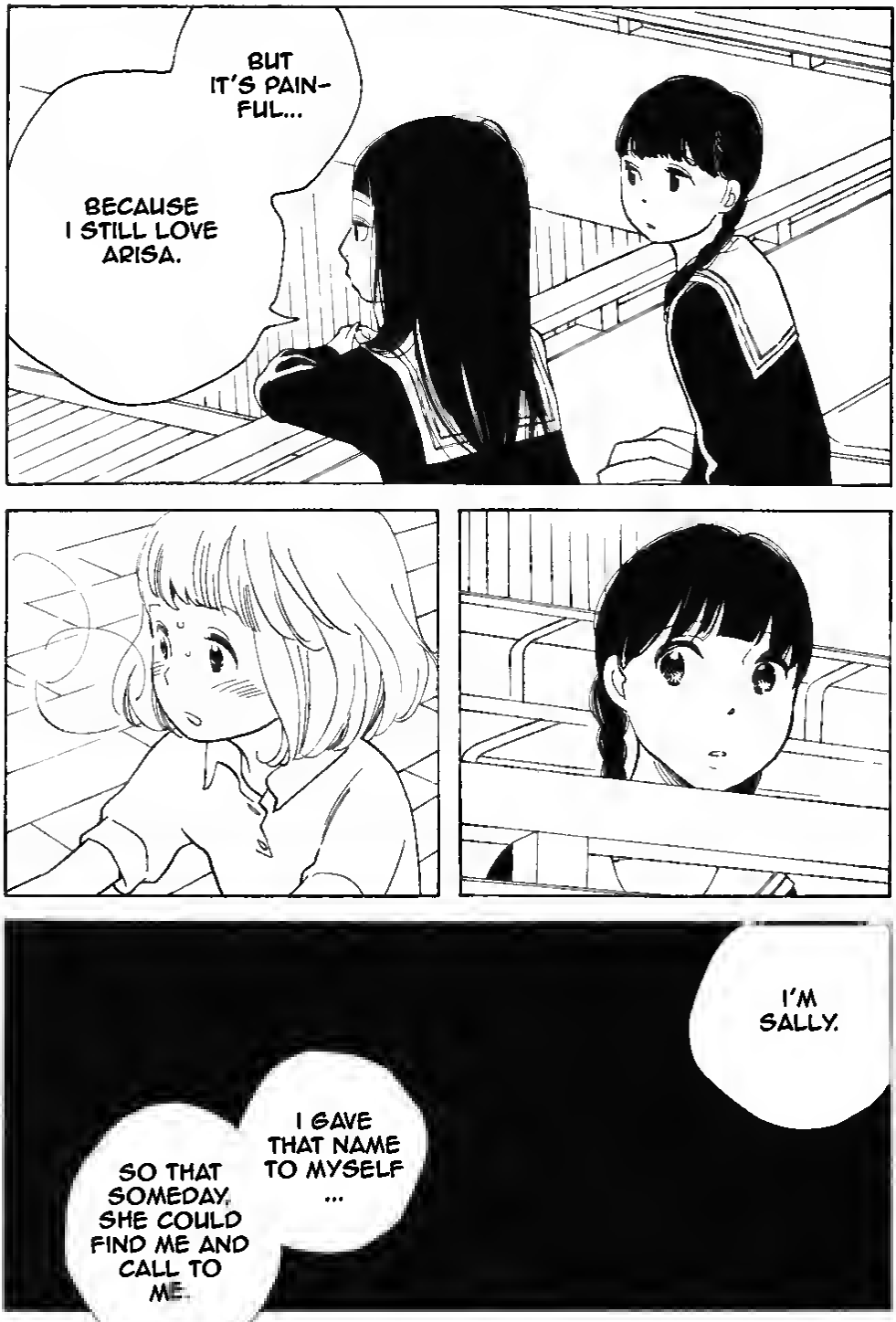

PLEASE ASSEMBLE QUICKLY IN THE GYM AS SOON AS LUNCH BREAK IS OVER.
WE'LL BE PLAYING BASKETBALL IN GYM CLASS TODAY.



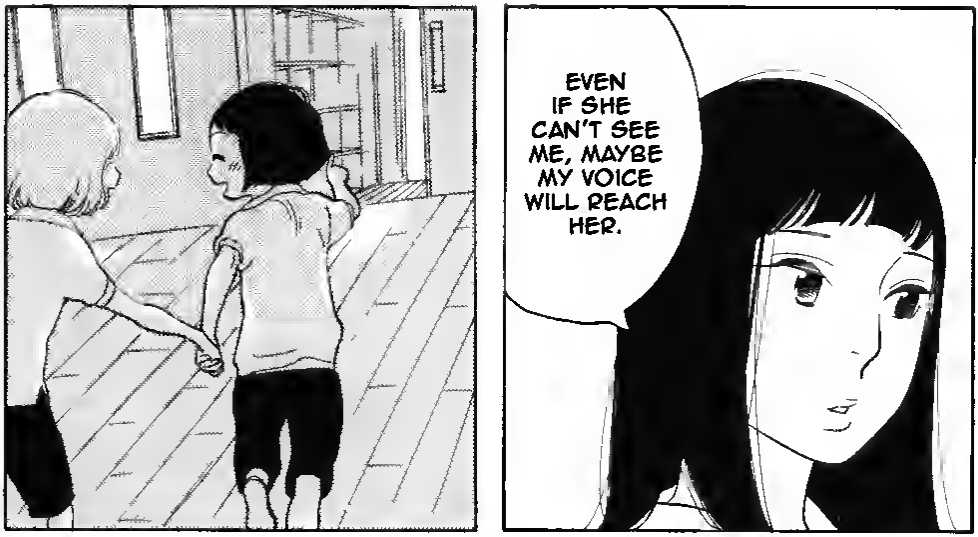

IT'S BETTER THAN RUNNING, THOUGH!
I CAN'T CATCH A BALL AT ALL.
I'M TERRIBLE AT BASKET-BALL!
NOOO!

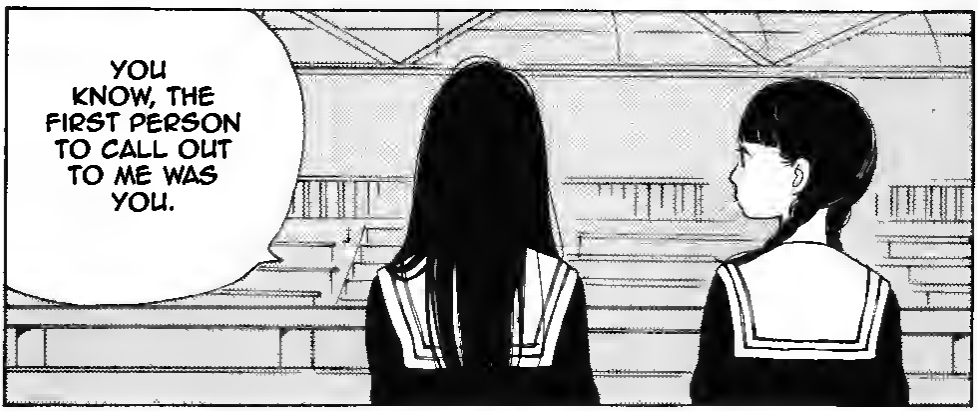
YOU KNOW, ARISA'S GOT SPIRIT, BUT...
IT CAN'T MAKE UP FOR HER LACK OF ATHLETIC ABILITY.
HMM.
CHECK OUT THAT THROW-IN, THOUGH! AMAZING!
SHE'S REALLY DOING HER PART FOR THE TEAM.

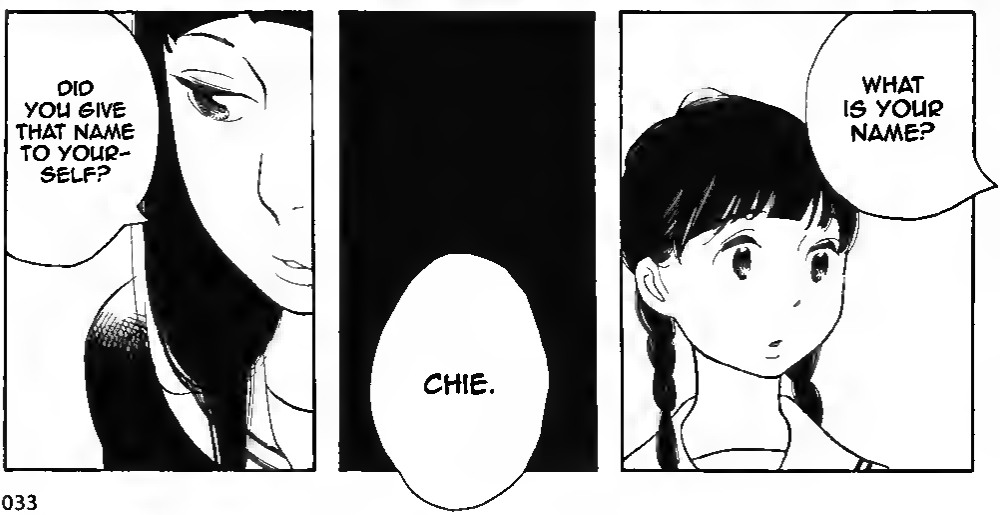
WHAT IS A "THROW IN"?
ARISA AND I WERE SISTERS.
AFTER I DIED...
ARISA SEEMED TO COMPLETELY FORGET ABOUT ME.
ISN'T THAT CRUEL?

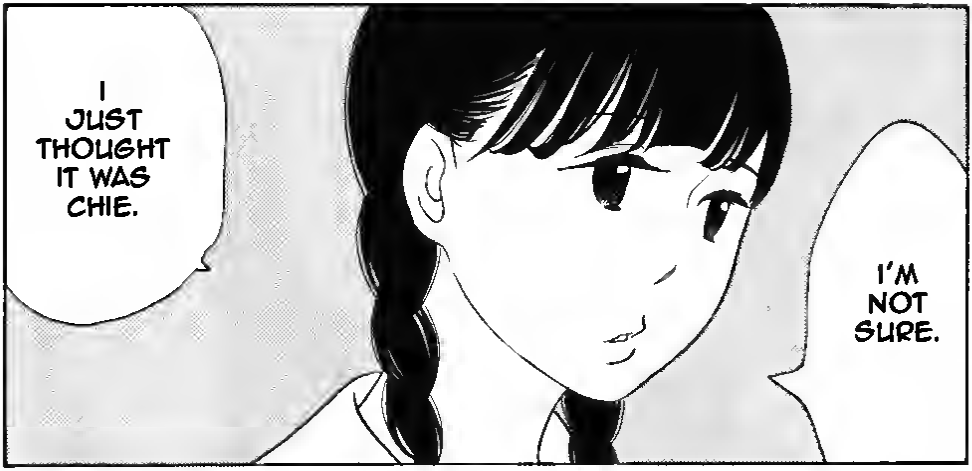

BUT IT'S PAIN-FUL...
BECAUSE I STILL LOVE ARISA.
I'M SALLY.
I GAVE THAT NAME TO MYSELF ...
SO THAT SOMEDAY, SHE COULD FIND ME AND CALL TO ME.

I FOR-
GOT MY
NAME.
IF
YOU GAVE
IT TO YOUR-
SELF, SHE
PROBABLY
WON'T KNOW
TO CALL
IT.
BUT
WHEN I
SAW ARISA,
IT CAME
TO ME.
LIKE,
"I'LL
MAKE
MY NAME
'SALLY.'"
SO
IT WILL
DEFINITELY
HELP HER
FIND ME.
BUT
SHE CAN'T
SEE YOU,
RIGHT?


EVEN IF SHE CAN'T SEE ME, MAYBE MY VOICE WILL REACH HER.


YOU KNOW, THE FIRST PERSON TO CALL OUT TO ME WAS YOU.


DID YOU GIVE THAT NAME TO YOUR-SELF?
CHIE.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?



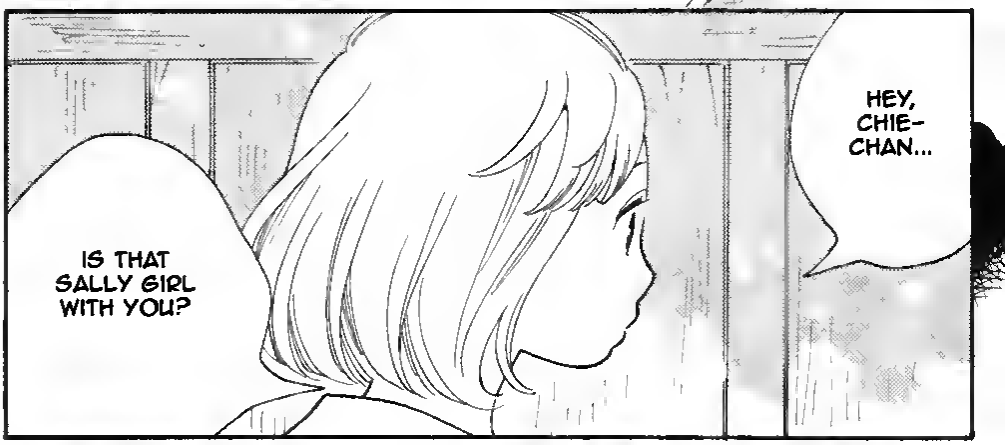
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, CHIE.

IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU TOO, SALLY.

わがままちえちゃん

Wagamama Chiechan

I'M OFF TO SCHOOL!

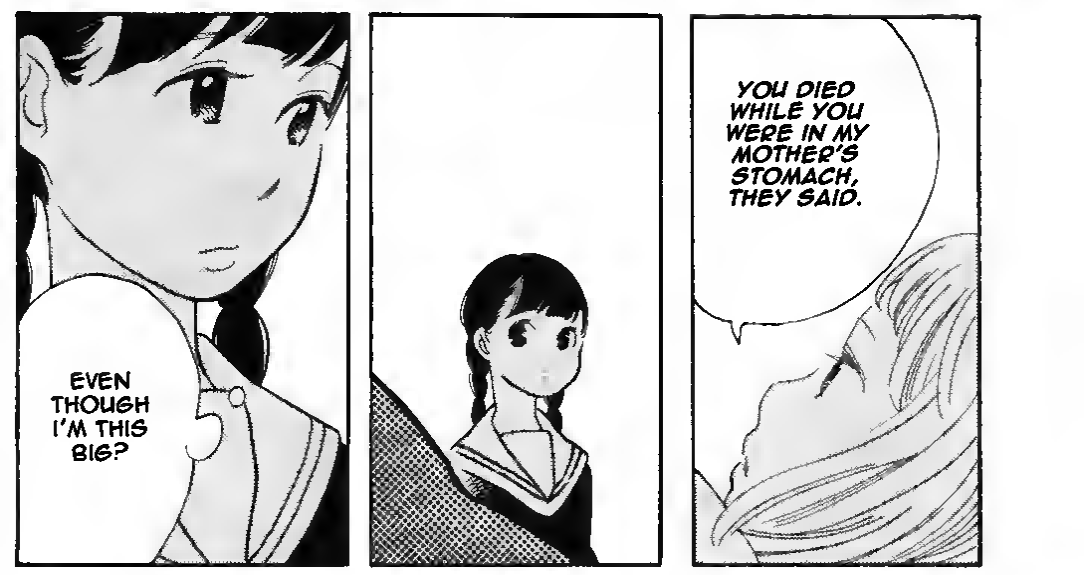

HEY, CHIE-CHAN...
IS THAT SALLY GIRL WITH YOU?

NOT RIGHT NOW.
OH, THAT'S TOO BAD.
BUT I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER, SINCE I CAN'T SEE HER ANYWAY...

CHAPTER 3

SO IT'S RUNNING TODAY...
THIS ONE HAS THE BEST VIEW.
OH! LET'S GO CLIMB OVER THERE!

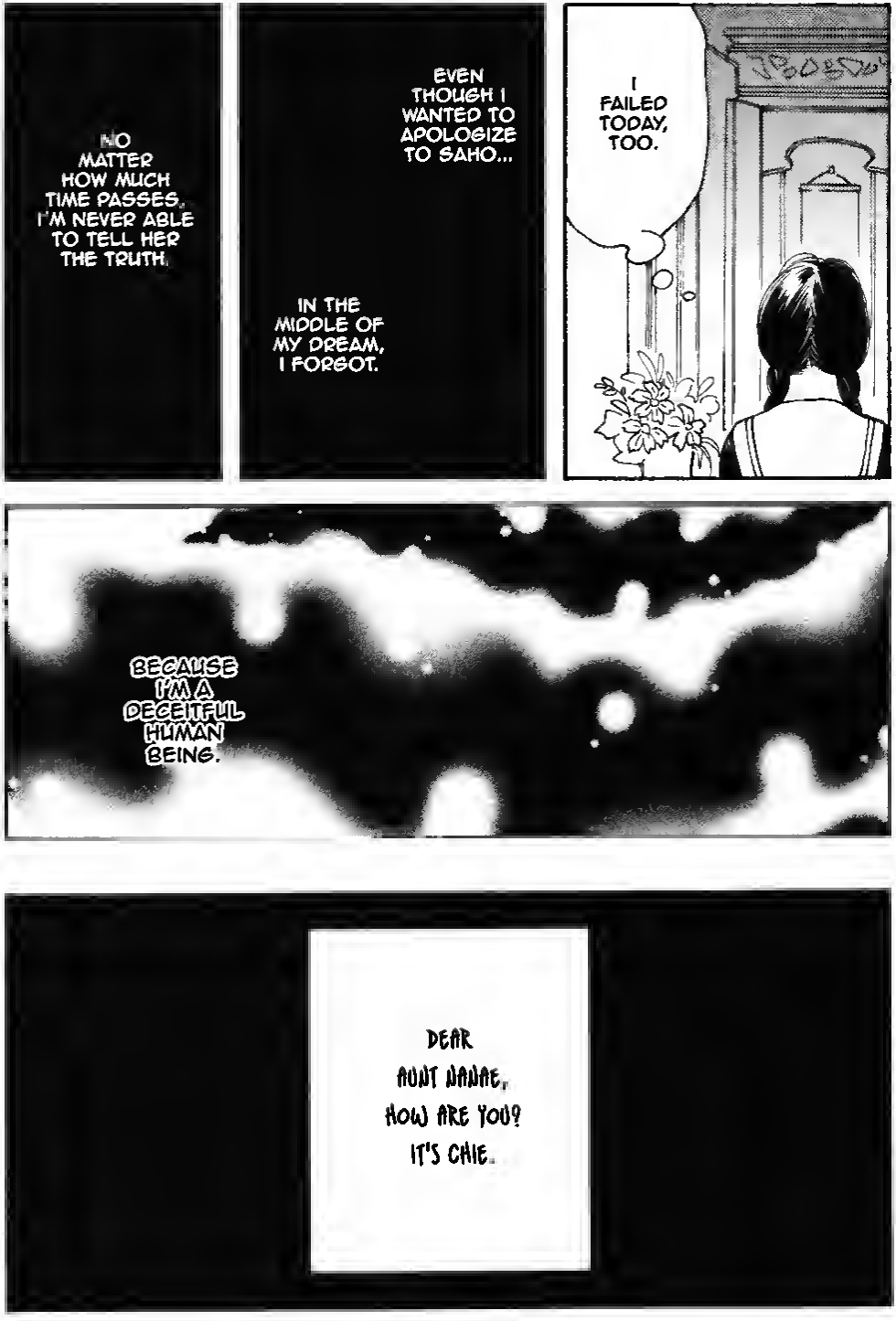
COME ON, IT'S EASY.
HUH? I CAN'T.
WELL, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN DEAD LONG, SO I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T KNOW HOW.
HAVEN'T BEEN DEAD LONG?
IS THAT RIGHT?


YOU DIED WHILE YOU WERE IN MY MOTHER'S STOMACH, THEY SAID.
EVEN THOUGH I'M THIS BIG?

WHEN DID I DIE?
I REM-EMEM-BER.
YOU WERE ARISA'S CAT.
SHE HAD A CAT NAMED SALLY.
MEOW.
ミャーミャー

SAHO'S CELL PHONE!
BEEEP
BEEEP
BEEEP
SAHO GOT...
THE PHONE THAT
FROM DAD, AS A PRESENT FOR START-ING MIDDLE SCHOOL.

BEEEEEEP
BEEEEEEP
BEEEEEEP
BEEEEEEP
...I'M AWAKE.
CHIE, ARE YOU AWAKE YET?
...HM?


NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME PASSES, I'M NEVER ABLE TO TELL HER THE TRUTH.
EVEN THOUGH I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE TO SAHO...
IN THE MIDDLE OF MY DREAM, I FORGOT.
I FAILED TODAY, TOO.
BECAUSE I'M A DECEITFUL HUMAN BEING.
DEAR AUNT NANAE, HOW ARE YOU? IT'S CHIE.

AT LAST, I'M GOING TO BE A MIDDLE SCHOOLER.

BEING SEPARATED FROM MY FRIENDS WILL BE LONELY.

I TOLD THEM WE COULD MEET UP AGAIN ANY TIME, BUT...

THEN I THINK, I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE THE HOUSE EARLY EVERYDAY, AND HOMEWORK WILL SOON GET DIFFICULT...

WHEN I START CLUB ACTIVITIES, EVERY DAY WILL BE EXHAUSTING, AND OUR TIME TO PLAY MIGHT DISAPPEAR.

BUT THE TRUTH IS, SAHO WILL ALSO BE ATTENDING SEIRAN ACADEMY.

I DON'T THINK SAHO WILL EVER FORGIVE ME, BUT I WANT TO APOLOGIZE TO HER PROPERLY.

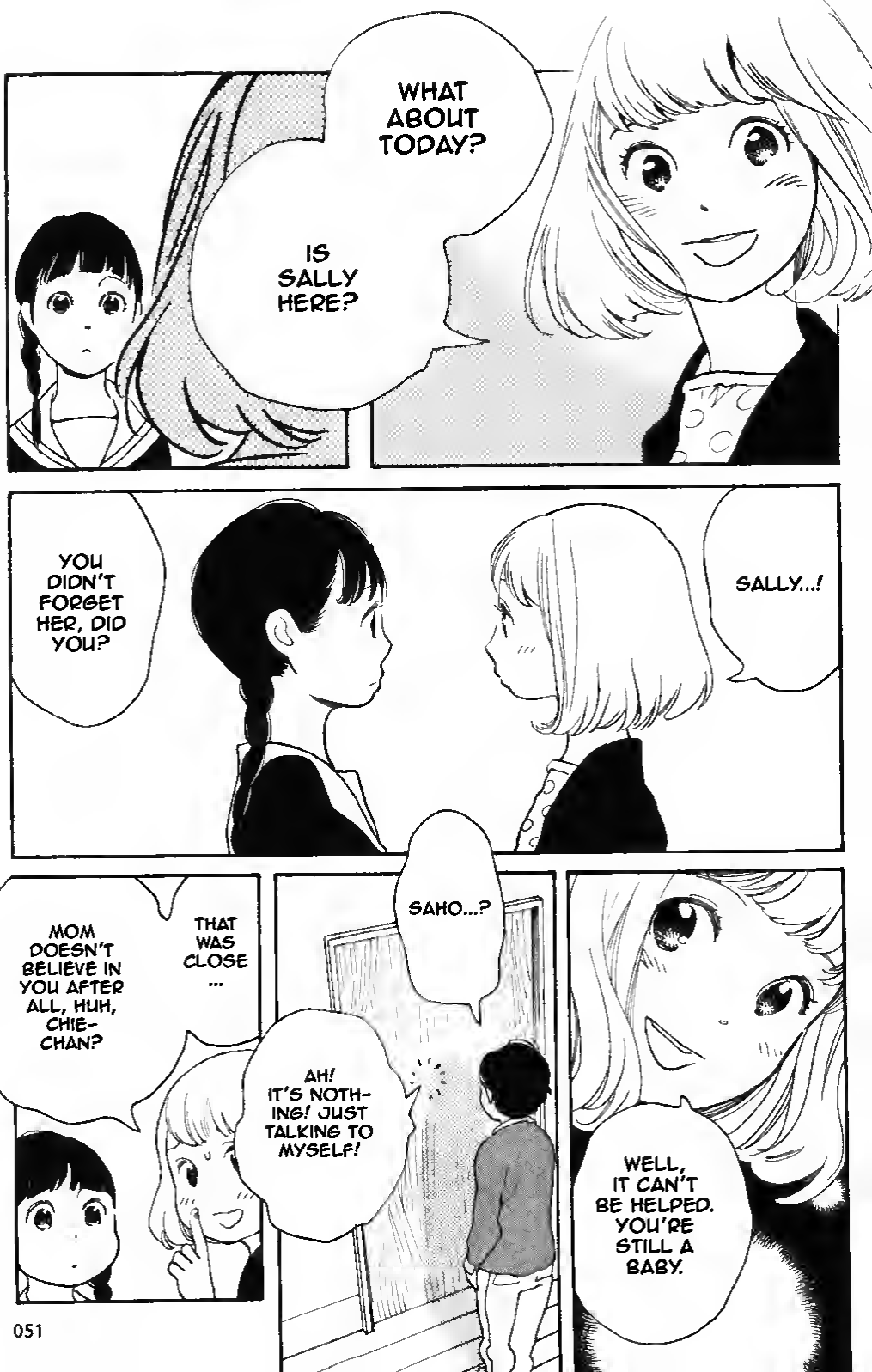
SO I'LL HAVE TO WORK HARD ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US.

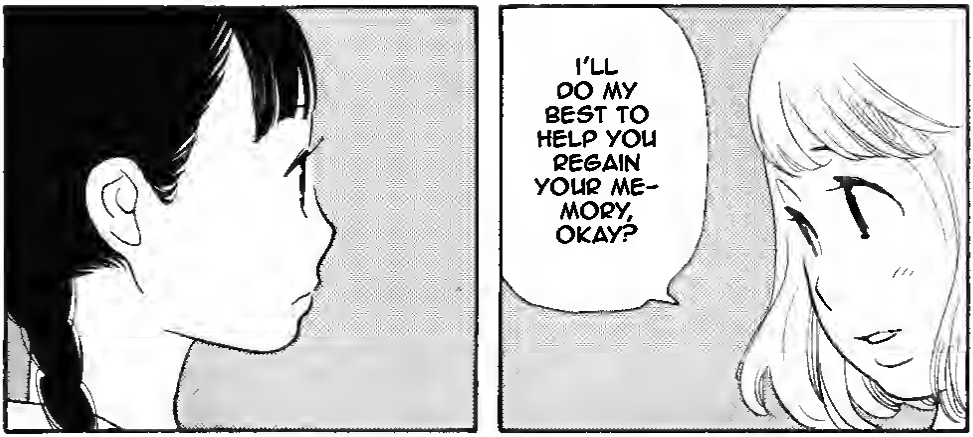
I'M A
DECEITFUL
HUMAN
BEING.

OH, MY!
WHAT'S THIS, ALL OF THE SUDDEN?
WORK'S SLOWED DOWN, SO I THOUGHT I'D COME VISIT FOR A BIT.
AND CHIE JUST HAD HER ENTRANCE CEREMONY, RIGHT?
IF WORK'S SLOWED DOWN, THAT MEANS YOU'RE STAYING THE NIGHT, RIGHT? CHIE WILL BE SO EXCITED.
YOU CAME ALL THIS WAY FOR THAT? YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.
OH, LOOK. JUST WHEN I WAS WONDERING WHERE MY HOODLUM DAUGHTER HAD RUN OFF TO...
YEAH, YEAH
CAKE
I'M GOING TO GO BRING THIS TO SAHO.

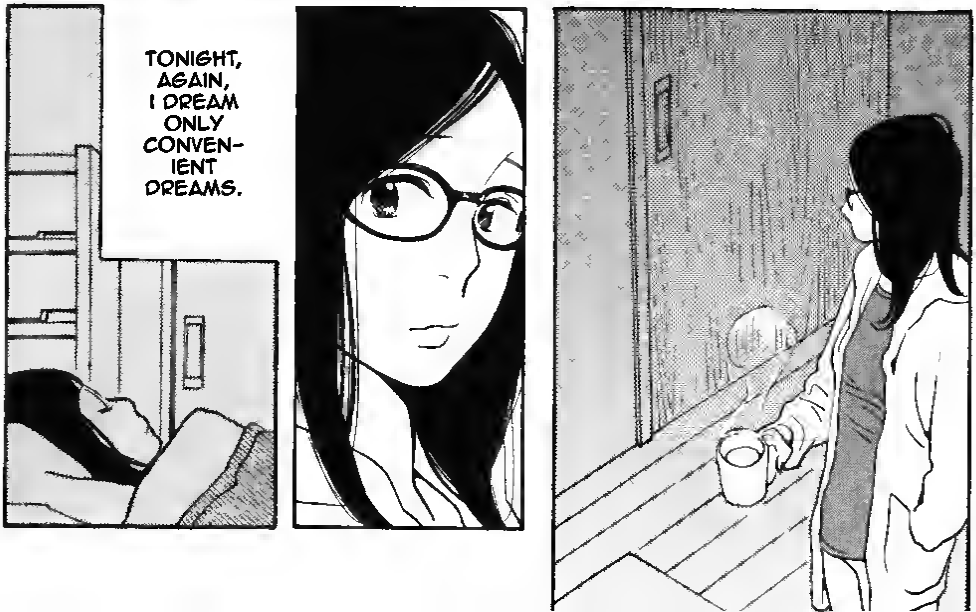
CAKE
SO CUTE...
RIGHT?
SHE'S TWO MONTHS OLD.
LOOK!
ARISA.
DON'T FORGET ABOUT SALLY, OKAY?
IF IT'S THIS SMALL, TAKING CARE OF IT WOULD BE IMPOSS-IBLE.
MY MOM SAID IT WOULD BE OKAY FOR ME TO HAVE A CAT NOW, BUT...

I-
I'M SORRY!
I DIDN'T SAY THAT TO BLAME YOU!
SHE BURSTS INTO TEARS
EVEN NOW
BECAUSE I HAVE NO HEART...
I ALWAYS END UP HURTING PEOPLE, SOONER OR LATER.


WHAT ABOUT TODAY?
IS SALLY HERE?
SALLY...!
YOU DIDN'T FORGET HER, DID YOU?
WELL, IT CAN'T BE HELPED. YOU'RE STILL A BABY.
SAHO...?
AH! IT'S NOTHING! JUST TALKING TO MYSELF!
THAT WAS CLOSE ...
MOM DOESN'T BELIEVE IN YOU AFTER ALL, HUH, CHIE-CHAN?

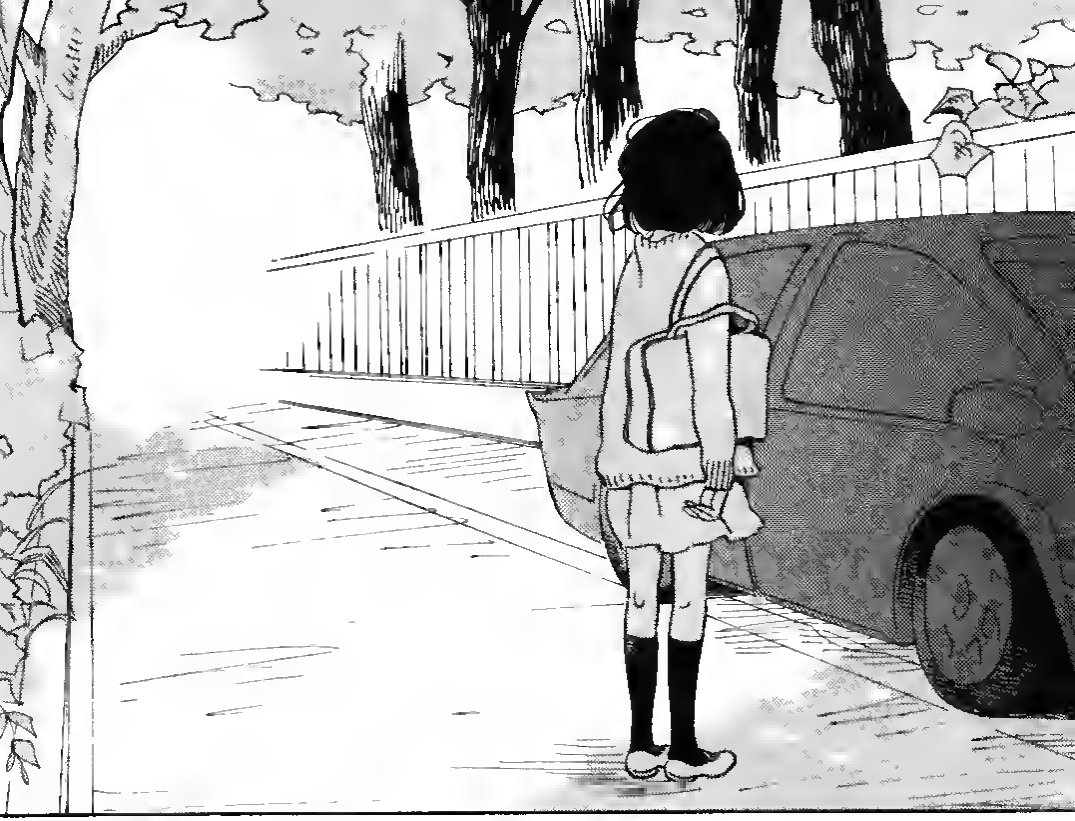

I'LL DO MY BEST TO HELP YOU REGAIN YOUR MEMORY, OKAY?

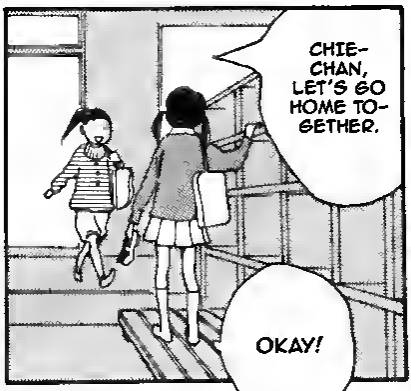
I'M A DECEITFUL HUMAN BEING.


TONIGHT, AGAIN, I DREAM ONLY CONVENIENT DREAMS.

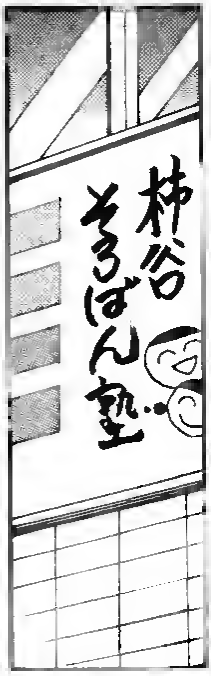
CHAPTER 4

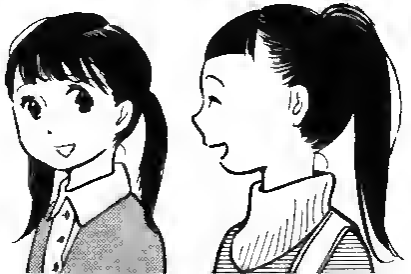
DO YOU KNOW HOW TO GET TO SUGANUMA HOSPITAL?
SUGA-NUMA HOSPITAL? GO STRAIGHT DOWN THIS ROAD...
AND WHEN IT TURNS INTO THE BIG ROAD, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE SIGN.
I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THIS AREA, SO I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND. COULD YOU SHOW ME THERE?

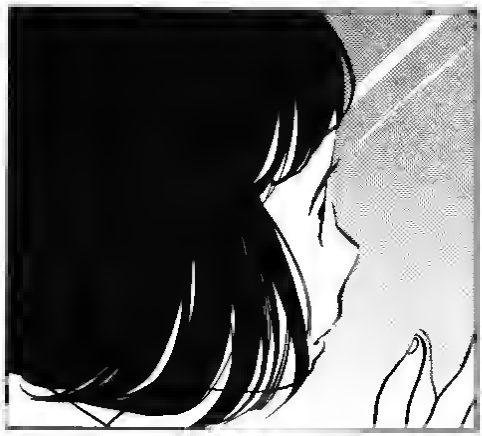


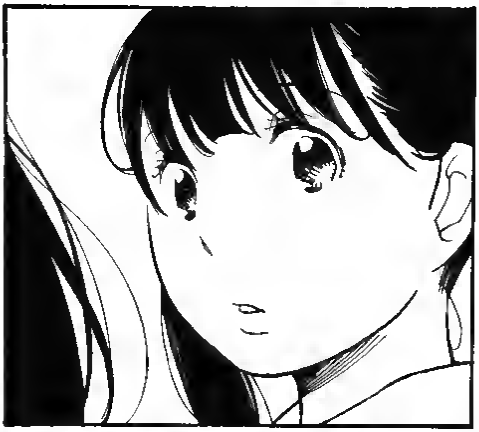

CHIE-CHAN, LET'S GO HOME TO-GETHER.
OKAY!

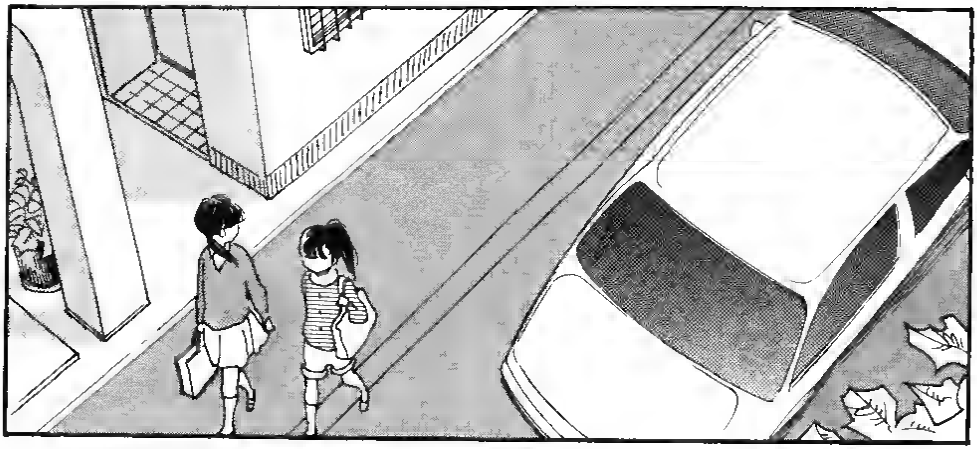
BYE, SEN-SEI!
BE CARE-FUL ON YOUR WAY HOME!

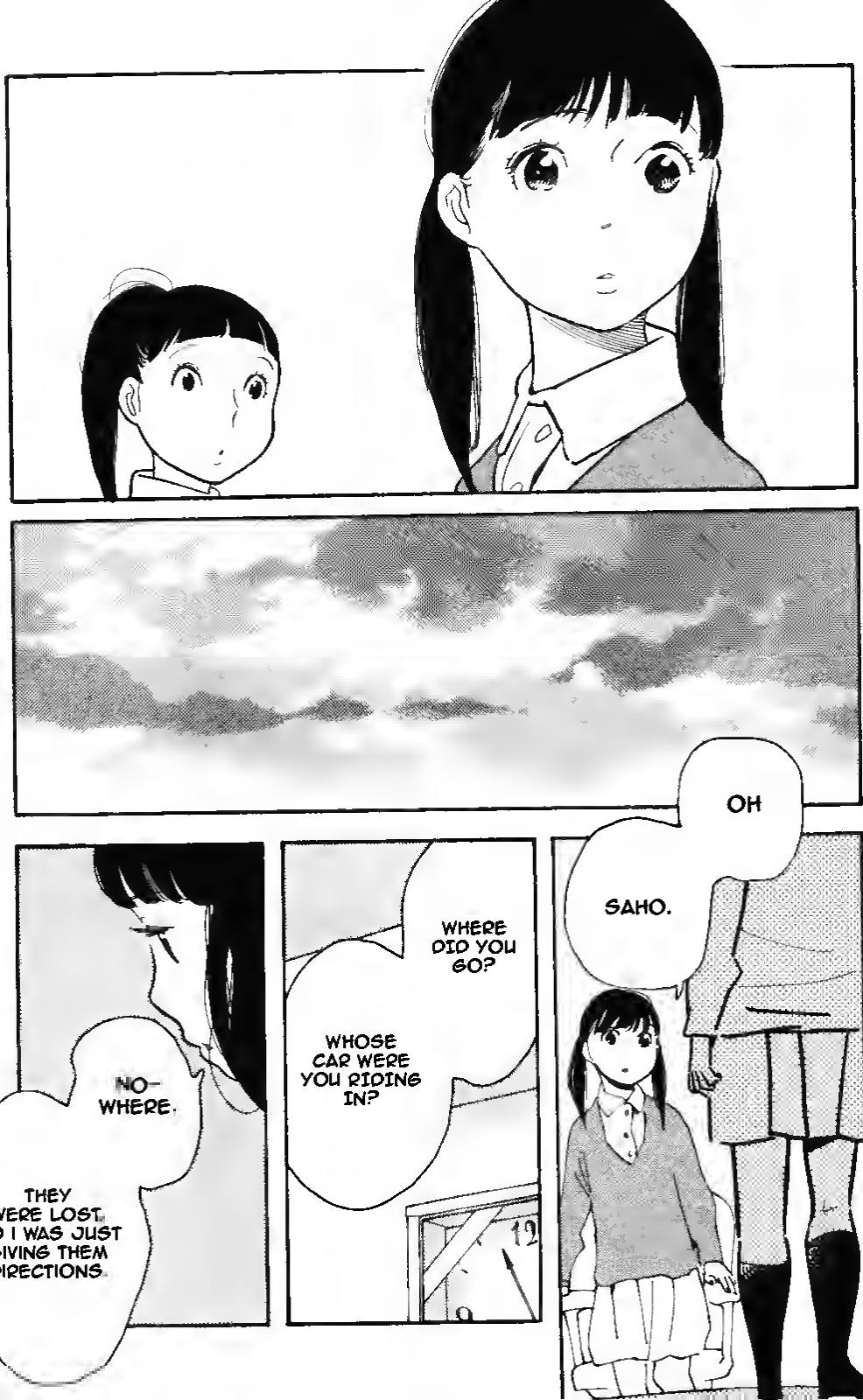

柿谷そらばん塾





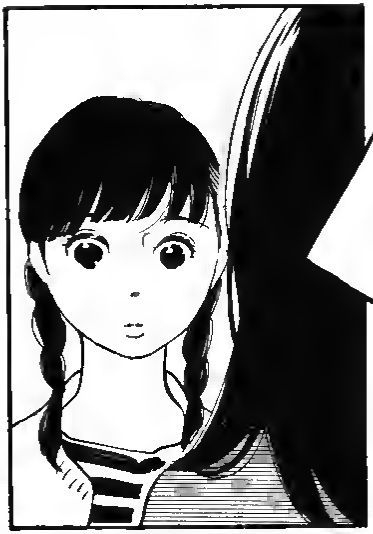




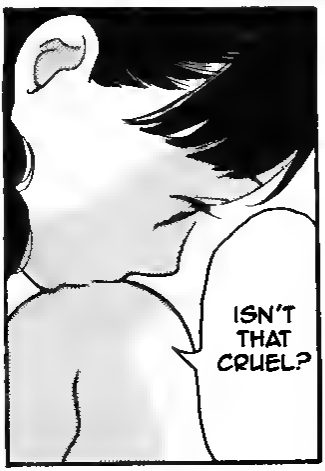

OH
SAHO.
WHERE DID YOU GO?
WHOSE CAR WERE YOU RIDING IN?
NO- WHERE.
THEY WERE LOST, SO I WAS JUST GIVING THEM DIRECTIONS.

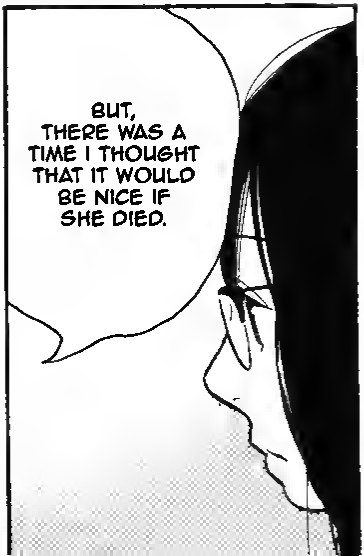
I WASN'T RIDING IN ANYONE'S CAR, OKAY?
YOU DIDN'T SEE ANY-THING.
DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT.
...OKAY.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO SAHO BACK THEN?

YOUR LETTER REALLY SURPR-ISED ME.



YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY-THING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED TO SAHO, RIGHT?


ISN'T THAT CRUEL?


BUT, THERE WAS A TIME I THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE NICE IF SHE DIED.

BACK THEN, DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO SAHO?

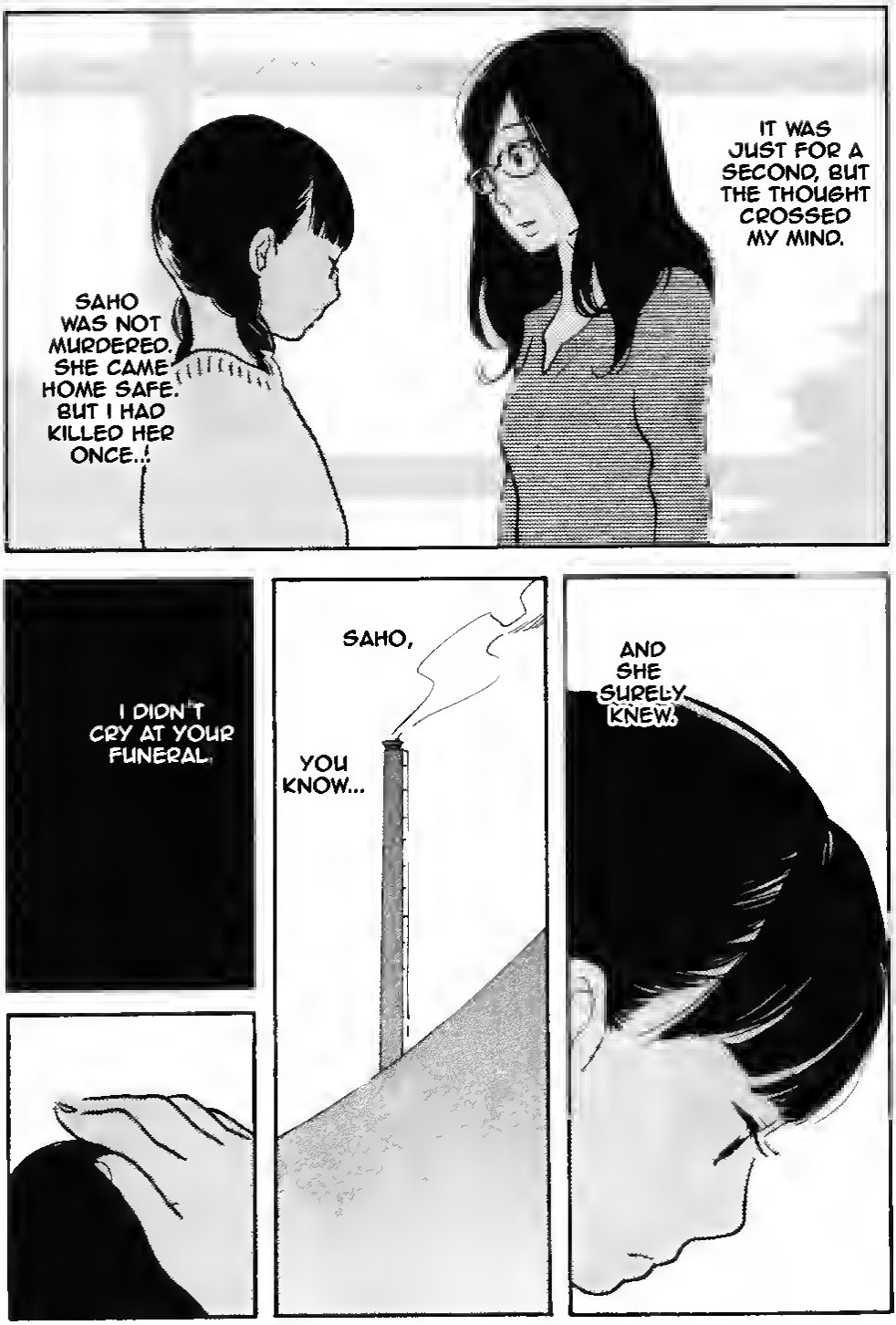
BECAUSE THEN SHE REALLY DID DIE.

I COULDN'T QUITE SEE, SO I DON'T KNOW.

"WHAT IF SOMEONE IS TAKING HER SOMEWHERE, AND SHE'S GOING TO BE KILLED?"

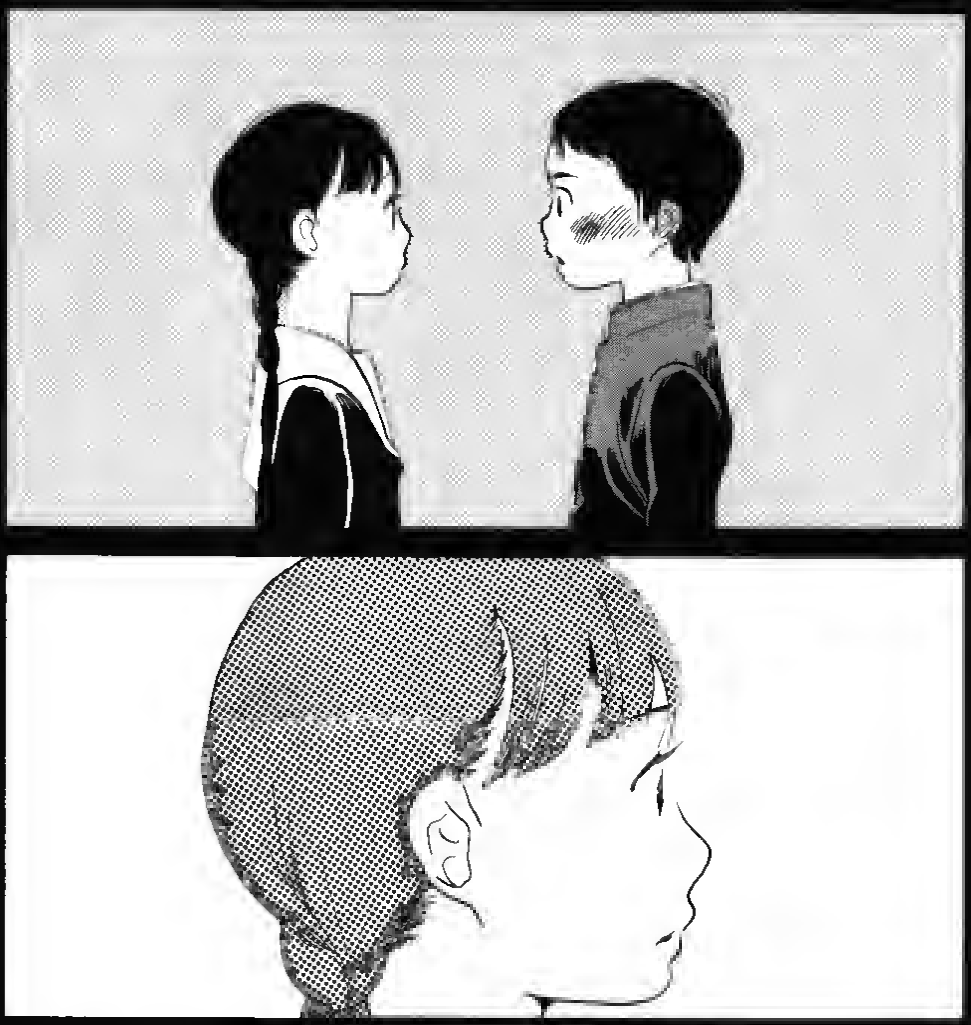
AS A KID, THERE WAS PROBABLY NOTHING I COULD DO, BUT...

BUT I THOUGHT SHE WAS PLEADING FOR HELP.


IT WAS JUST FOR A SECOND, BUT THE THOUGHT CROSSED MY MIND.
SAHO WAS NOT MURDERED. SHE CAME HOME SAFE. BUT I HAD KILLED HER ONCE..!
I DIDN'T CRY AT YOUR FUNERAL.
SAHO, YOU KNOW...
AND SHE SURELY KNEW.

AM I GROWN UP?
AUNT NANAE SAID...
YOU DIDN'T CRY, HUH, CHIE-CHAN? THAT'S VERY GROWN UP OF YOU.
HEEEY!
HANAWA, HEEEY!
PANT
PANT
IT'S BEEN FOR-EVER!
HOW ARE YOU?

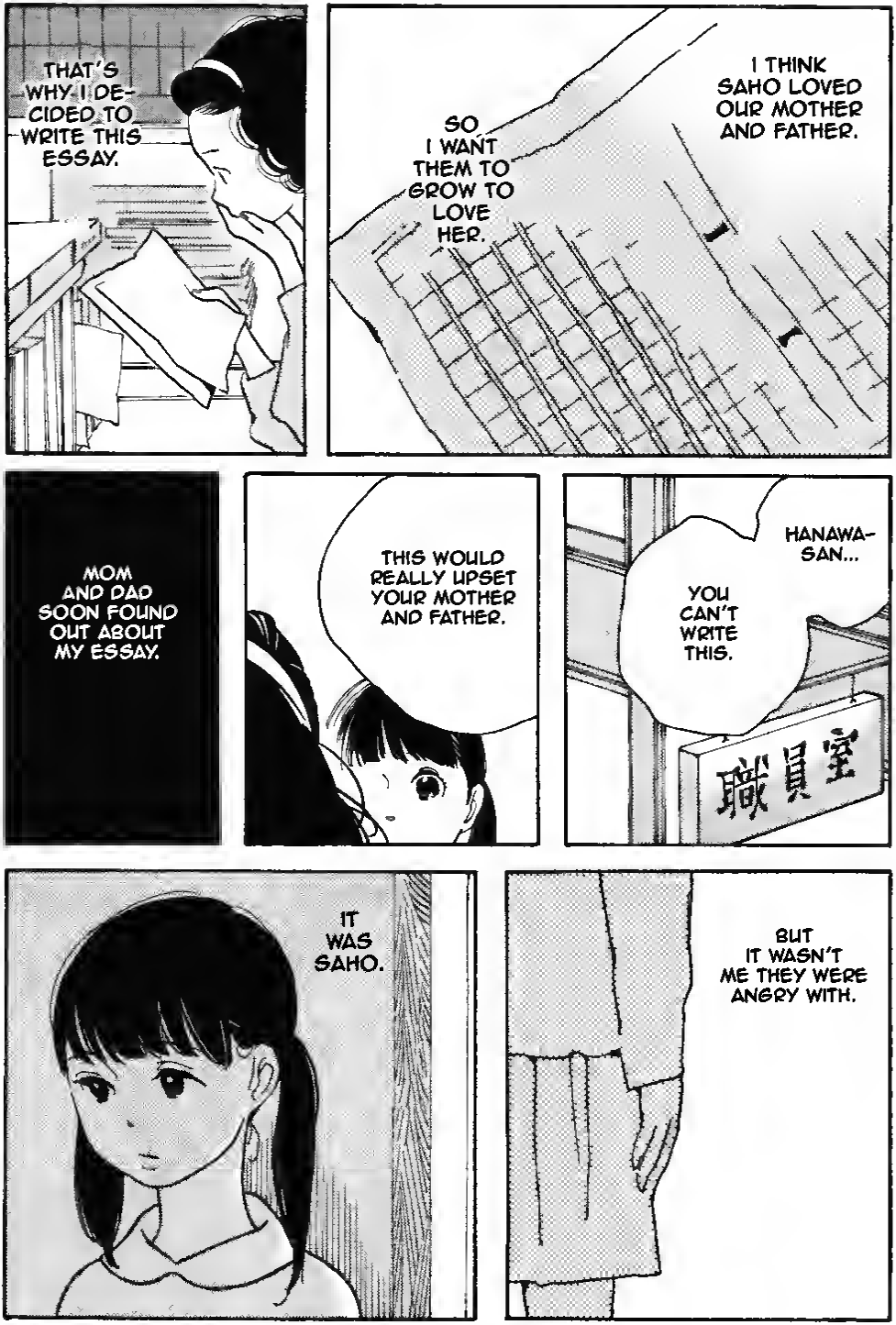
I GET IT, THOUGH. AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO HANAWA...
WHERE WERE YOU AFTER GRAD-UATION?
YOU DIDN'T COME TO THE THANK-YOU PARTY, SO...
...SORRY.
OH,
BY "HANAWA," I DIDN'T MEAN YOU!
NO REASON... I JUST HAD A FEEL-ING.
N-NO, BUT WHY WOULD YOU THINK THAT?
THE ONE I LIKED WAS YOU!
HUH?
INUI-KUN,
DID YOU LIKE SAHO?



SAHO AND I ARE TWINS.

I WAS BORN JUST A LITTLE EARLIER, THOUGH.

YOU KNOW...
TO BE HONEST, I THINK CHIE IS CUTER.
APPARENTLY I WAS ALWAYS SMILING, ALWAYS CHEERFUL.
SAHO DIDN'T SMILE OFTEN.
BUT SHE WAS REALLY A KINDHEARTED GIRL.
HOW COULD YOU SAY SUCH A HEARTLESS THING?
B
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!? BOTH OF THEM ARE OUR ADORABLE DAUGHTERS!
A
WHAT SHOULD OUR FATHER HAVE SAID, THEN?
I WAS SHOCKED.
BUT WHAT HE SAID WAS...
YOU SHOULDN'T SAY THAT KIND OF THING OUT LOUD.


THAT'S WHY I DECIDED TO WRITE THIS ESSAY.
I THINK SAHO LOVED OUR MOTHER AND FATHER.
SO I WANT THEM TO GROW TO LOVE HER.
MOM AND DAD SOON FOUND OUT ABOUT MY ESSAY.
THIS WOULD REALLY UPSET YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER.
HANAWA-SAN...
YOU CAN'T WRITE THIS.
職員室
IT WAS SAHO.
BUT IT WASN'T ME THEY WERE ANGRY WITH.

I THINK MOM AND DAD KILLED HER.
WHY DID SAHO DIE?
BUT EVEN SO, NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME PASSES, I NEVER SEE HER SORROWFUL FIGURE IN MY DREAMS.
EITHER WAY, I THINK I MUST HAVE ALSO KILLED HER.

THE REAL SAHO
DES-PISED ME.

わがままちえちゃん

Wagamama Chiechan

CHAPTER 5

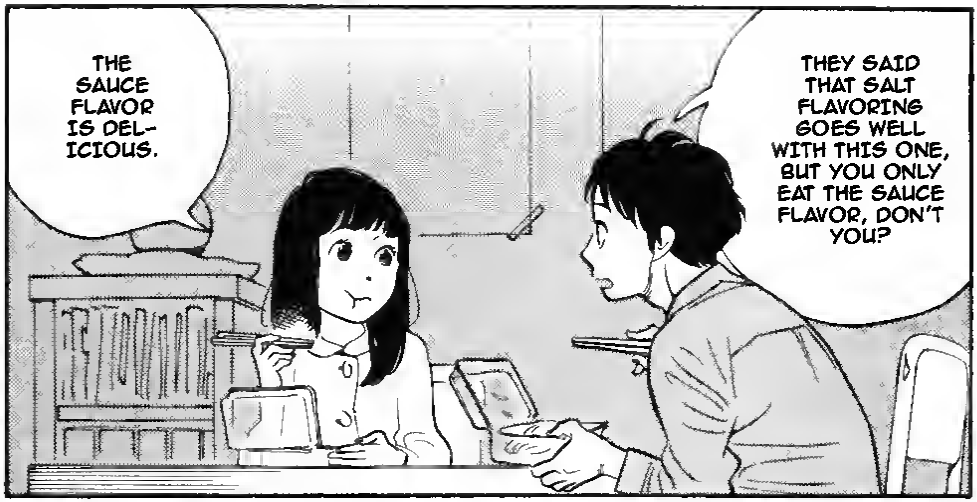
I'VE ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL.
NOW-AWAYS, I COMMUTE TO SCHOOL FROM AUNT NANAE'S HOUSE.
IT'S AN EASY COMMUTE FROM HER HOUSE, WHICH IS WHY I CHOSE IT.

占の館

FORTUNE TELLER

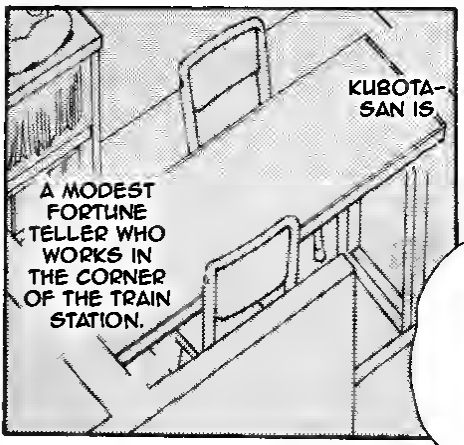
YOU'RE AWFULLY YOUNG, AREN'T YOU?
THAT'S KIND OF YOU TO SAY.
CHAPTER 5

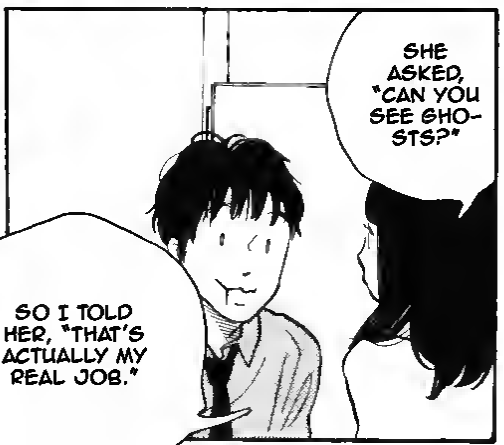
占い館
フローリスト
SORRY! THERE WAS A SUPER LONG LINE.
WERE THERE ANY CUSTOMERS?
JUST ONE.
CRAP...
I SAW HER IN YOUR PLACE.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
DON'T DO THAT! GEEZ...
HMM, WELL YOU DO HAVE A TALENT FOR SMOOTH TALKING, SO I GUESS IT'S OKAY...
WANT ANY YAKISOBA?
YES PLEASE.


THE SAUCE FLAVOR IS DELICIOUS.
THEY SAID THAT SALT FLAVORING GOES WELL WITH THIS ONE, BUT YOU ONLY EAT THE SAUCE FLAVOR, DON'T YOU?

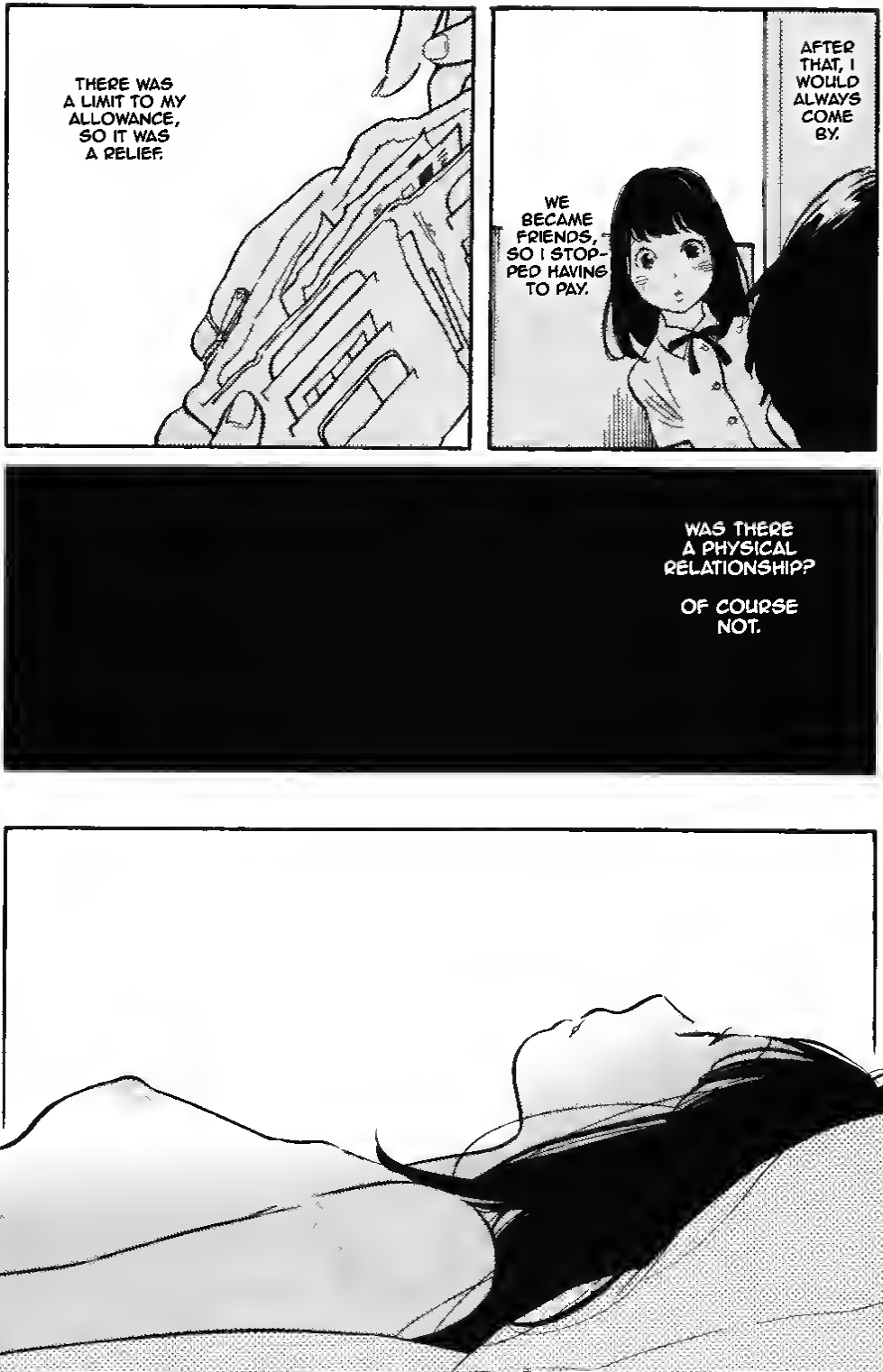
THE WOMAN WHO CAME EARLIER...

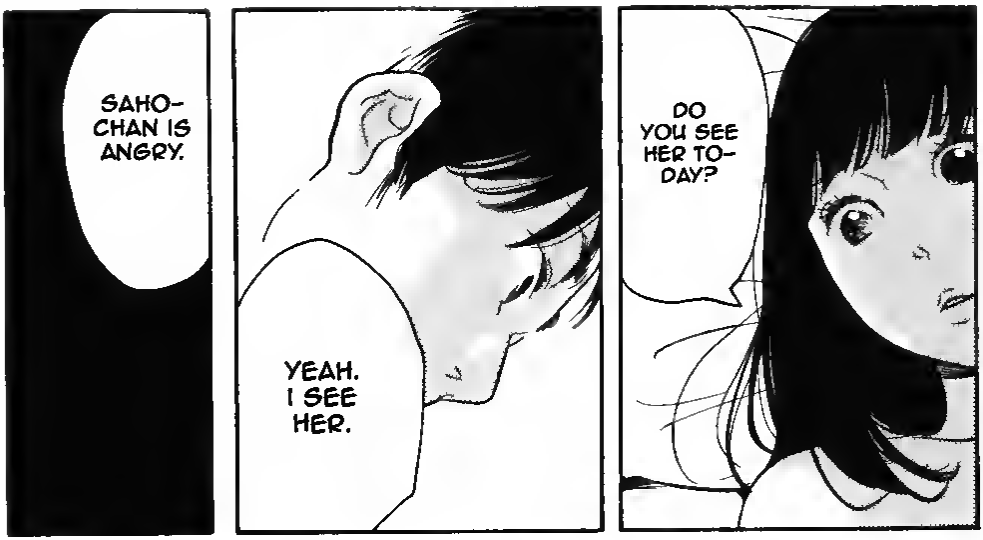
YOU'VE GOT SOME ON YOUR FACE.

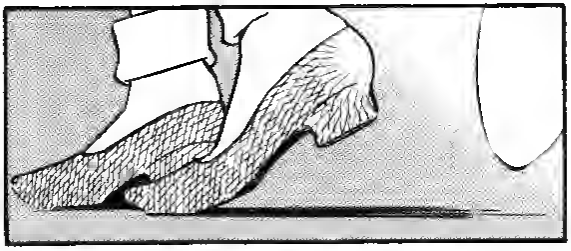

KUBOTA-SAN IS
A MODEST FORTUNE TELLER WHO WORKS IN THE CORNER OF THE TRAIN STATION.

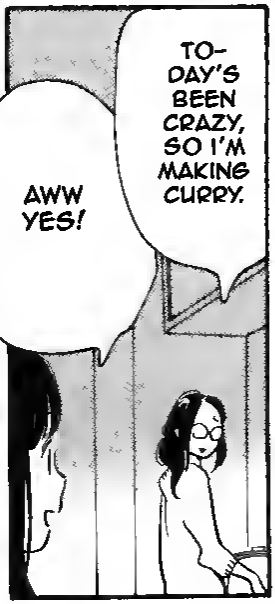

SHE ASKED, "CAN YOU SEE GHOSTS?"
SO I TOLD HER, "THAT'S ACTUALLY MY REAL JOB."

I GOT THE URGE TO AT LEAST HAVE A PALM READING, AND WENT IN.
占い
手相
タロット
氷
AS I WAS DOING SOME SHOPPING FOR AUNT NANAE, SOMEHOW, ON MY WAY HOME...
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOKED AT HIM, HE WAS A NORMAL GUY
THINKING, THIS KIND OF PLAIN GUY WOULD BE THE PERFECT PERSON, I ASKED HIM...
CAN YOU SEE GHOSTS?
YOU MEAN, LIKE MAKING CONTACT WITH THEM?
UH... YEAH, SURE?
THAT'S ACTUALLY MY REAL JOB.

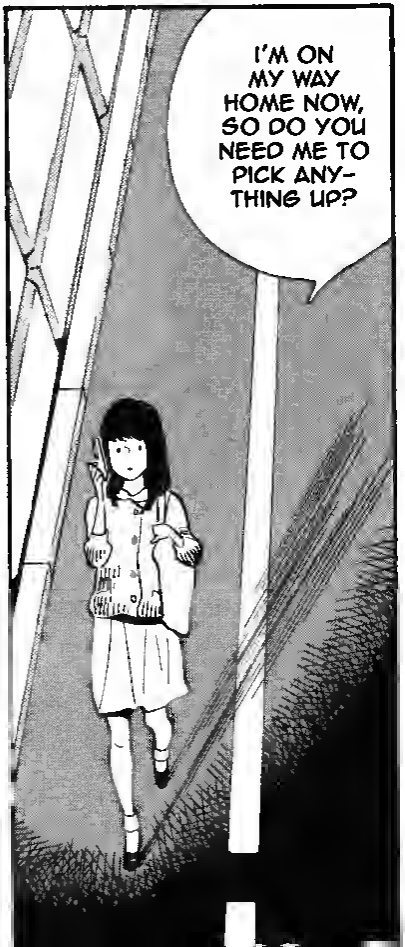

THERE WAS A LIMIT TO MY ALLOWANCE, SO IT WAS A RELIEF.
WE BECAME FRIENDS, SO I STOPPED HAVING TO PAY.
AFTER THAT, I WOULD ALWAYS COME BY.
WAS THERE A PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIP?
OF COURSE NOT.


SAHO-CHAN IS ANGRY.
YEAH. I SEE HER.
DO YOU SEE HER TO-DAY?

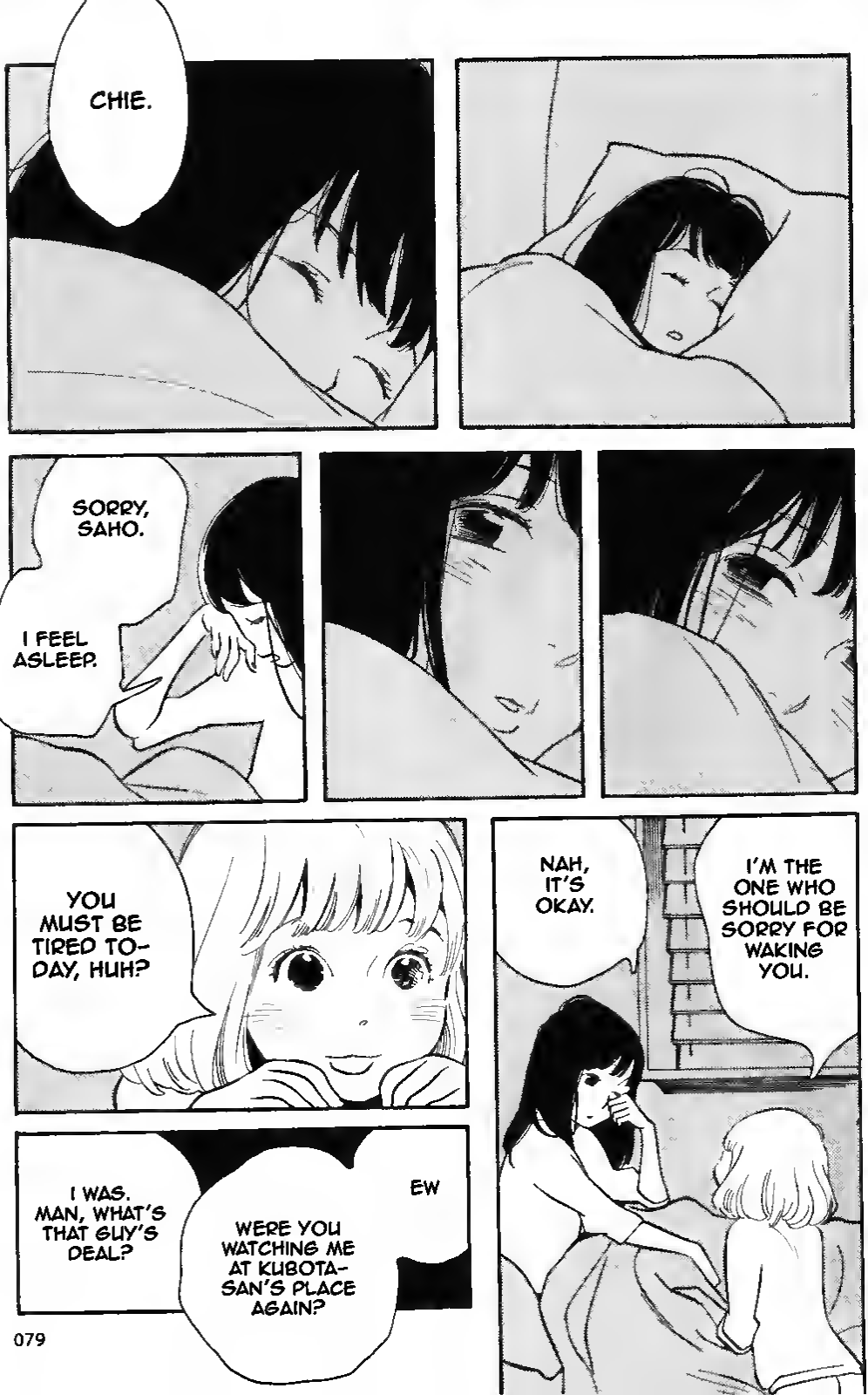



TO-DAY'S BEEN CRAZY, SO I'M MAKING CURRY.
AWW YES!

SORRY I'M LATE.
MM I'M HUN-GRY...
WEL-COME HOME!

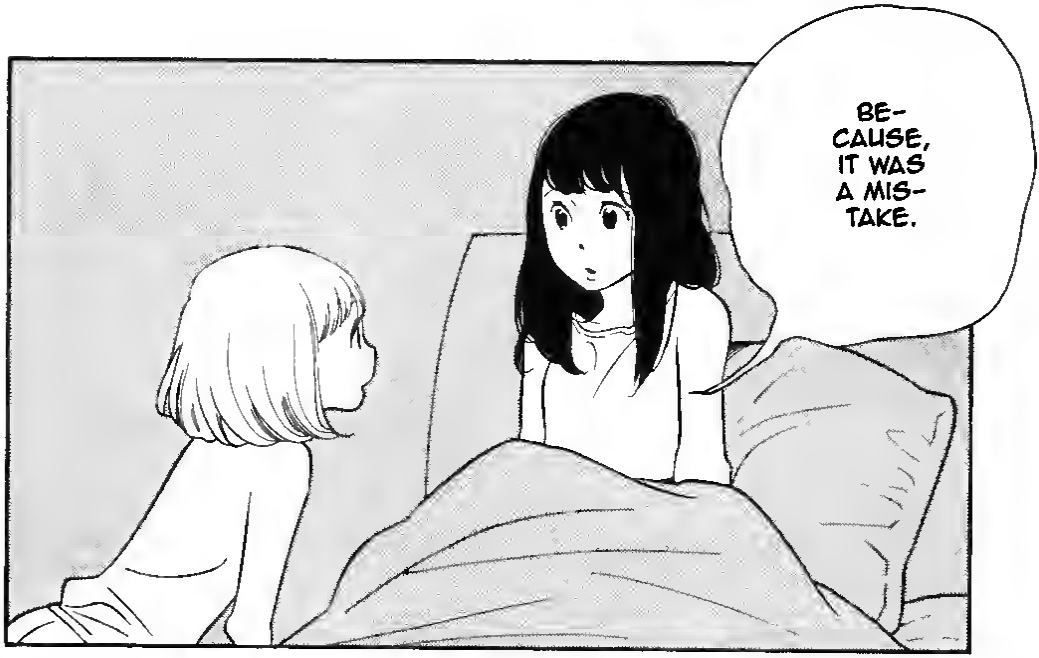

I'M ON MY WAY HOME NOW, SO DO YOU NEED ME TO PICK ANY-THING UP?

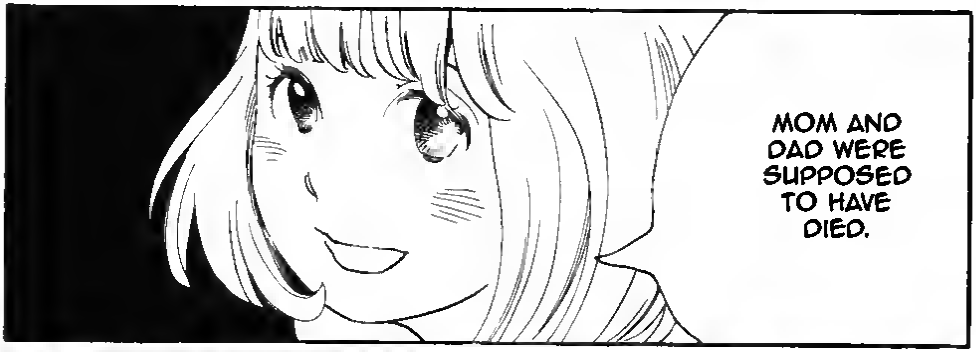
YOU SEEM HAPPY LATELY, CHIE.
DID I REALLY SEEM THAT GLUM BE-FORE?
HM, WELL...

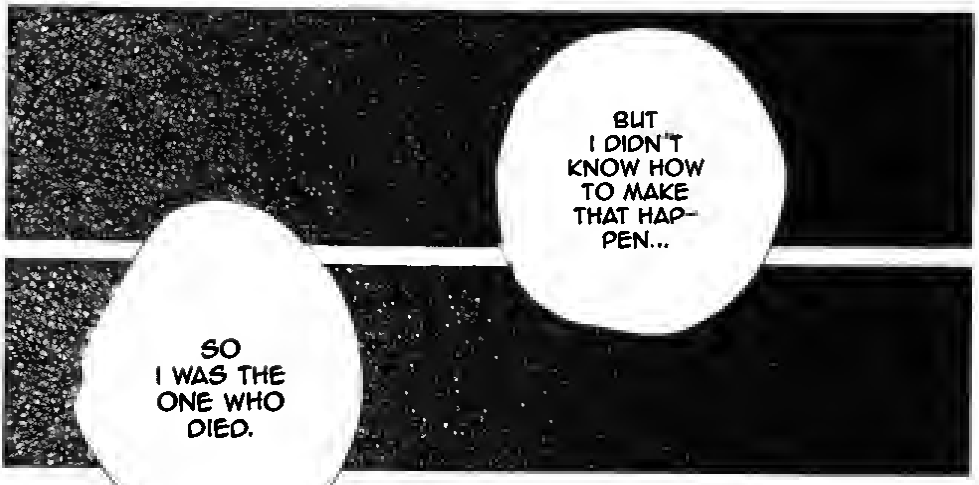

CHIE.
SORRY, SAHO.
I FEEL ASLEEP.
YOU MUST BE TIRED TODAY, HUH?
I WAS. MAN, WHAT'S THAT GUY'S DEAL?
EW
WERE YOU WATCHING ME AT KUBOTA-SAN'S PLACE AGAIN?
NAH, IT'S OKAY.
I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE SORRY FOR WAKING YOU.

"SAHO-CHAN IS ANGRY,"
HE SAID.
HA HA.
HE CAN'T SEE ANYTHING, CAN HE?
I KNOW.
IF YOU KNOW THAT, YOU SHOULDN'T GO SEE HIM!
YEAH.
BUT
ISN'T WHAT HAPPEN-ED TO YOU BACK THEN...
THE SAME THING KUBOTA-SAN IS DOING TO ME NOW?

YOU'RE SO SILLY, CHIE. YOU SHOULDN'T GO TO SUCH LENGTHS TO IMITATE ME.
YOU KNOW, THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I THOUGHT, WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF CHIE DIED?
I'M SORRY.
I FOR-GIVE YOU.
BE-CAUSE, I FELT THE SAME ABOUT YOU.
I KNEW.


BE-
CAUSE,
IT WAS
A MIS-
TAKE.

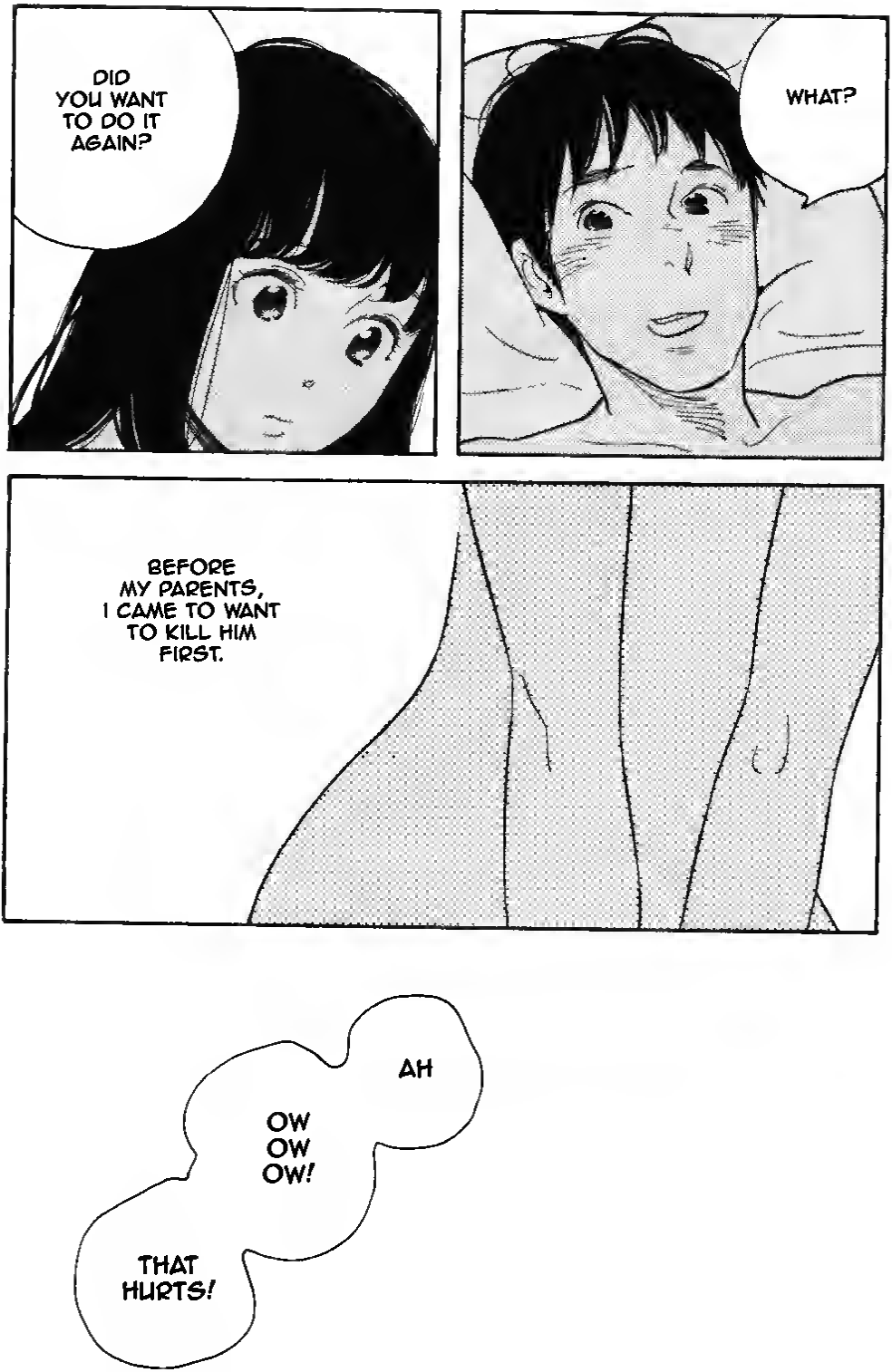

MOM AND
DAD WERE
SUPPOSED
TO HAVE
DIED.


BUT
I DIDN'T
KNOW HOW
TO MAKE
THAT HAP-
PEN...
SO
I WAS THE
ONE WHO
DIED.

I'M SORRY.
I'M SORRY, SAHO.
IF ONLY I HAD REAL-IZED HOW YOU FELT SOON-ER...
I'LL KILL MOM AND DAD, OKAY?

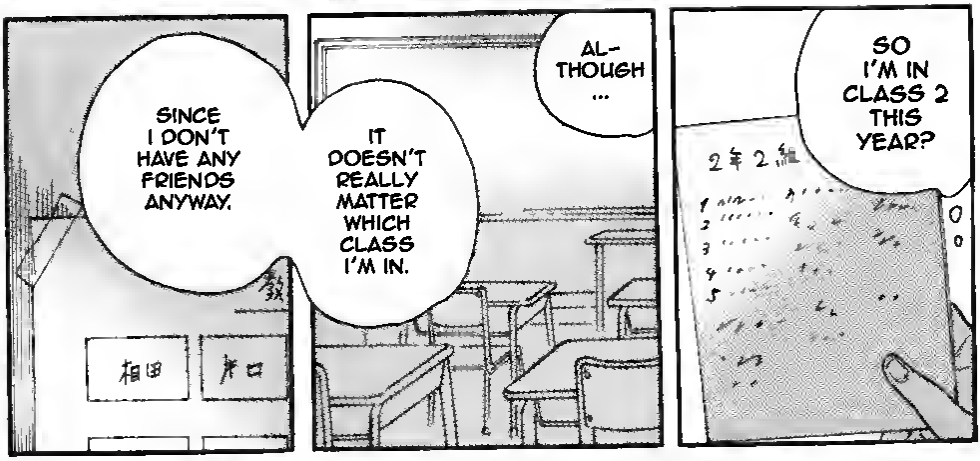
I'LL KILL THEM, OKAY?

IS THERE NO LEGAL WAY TO KILL SOME-ONE?
BUT I CAN'T THINK OF A GOOD METH-OD.
I'M OFF TO SCHOOL!
I DON'T WANT TO BE ARRES-TED FOR PATRICIDE.
I WONDER IF HE'LL KILL FOR ME?
IF I HAVE SEX WITH HIM A BUNCH OF TIMES...

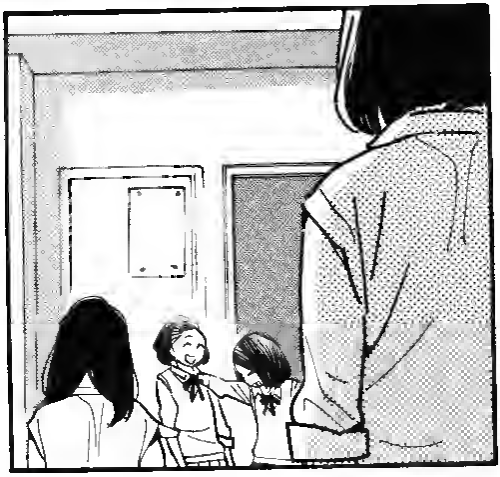

DID YOU WANT TO DO IT AGAIN?
WHAT?
BEFORE MY PARENTS, I CAME TO WANT TO KILL HIM FIRST.
AH
OW OW OW!
THAT HURTS!

CHAPTER 6

CHIEEE!
YOU'VE GOT SCHOOL FROM TODAY ON, RIGHT? YOU'D BETTER GET READY.


SINCE I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS ANYWAY.
IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER WHICH CLASS I'M IN.
AL-THOUGH ...
SO I'M IN CLASS 2 THIS YEAR?
2年2組

HI.



SAHO!
HUH?
NO...
...THEY DON'T LOOK AT ALL ALIKE.

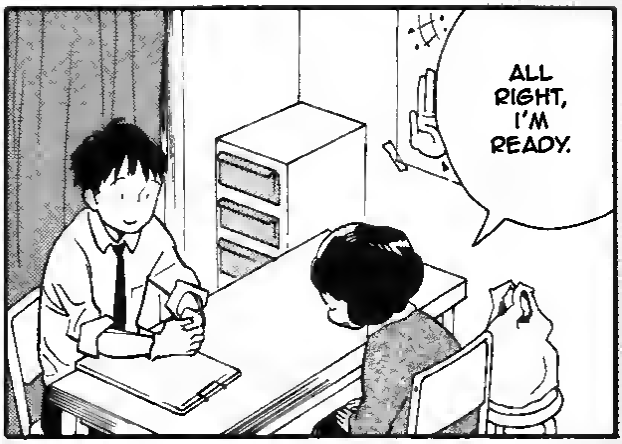
HER VOICE
WAS JUST LIKE SAHO'S.
IT'S JUST... YOU REMIND ME A LITTLE OF SOME-ONE I KNOW.
I'M SORRY.
OH
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT.
MY NAME IS TONEGAWA MAI.
110 F
I WANT TO HEAR MORE
OF TONE-GAWA-SAN'S VOICE.
YOU REMIND ME OF MY DEAD LITTLE SISTER.
UM
MY NAME IS NAKA-MURA YUMI.

WE WERE TWINS.
WAIT, TWINS? AREN'T TWINS USUALLY IDENTICAL?
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WERE SO SURPRISED BY ME!
YEAH
SAHO WAS BEAUTIFUL.
YOU AND ME ARE NOT REALLY...
YEAH. YOU DON'T REALLY LOOK LIKE HER.

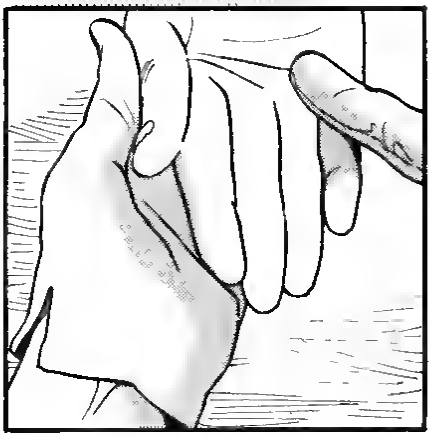
IT'S YOUR VOICE.
WHEN YOU TALK, IT'S AS IF SAHO HAS COME BACK TO LIFE.
T-THAT SIMILAR?
AH
WELL, I'M GOING TO GO TAKE OUT THE TRASH.
WHAT AN INTENSE PERSON!
HEY!
EARLIER, I SAID SOMETHING RUDE, DIDN'T I?

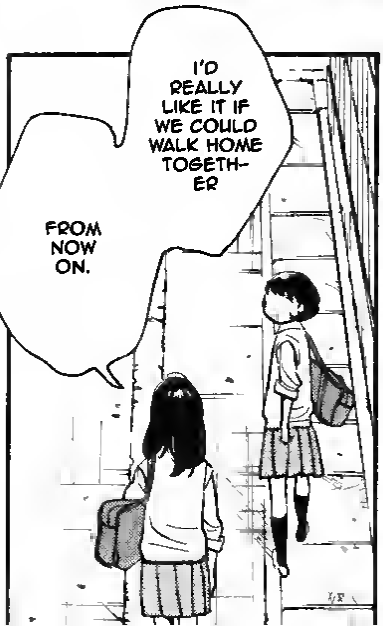
I'M SORRY.
I MADE IT SOUND LIKE I THOUGHT YOU WERE UGLY.
I CAN'T TELL IF SHE WAS BEING EARNEST OR SARCASTIC.
SHE REALLY IS INTENSE
UM
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I AM UGLY AFTER ALL
I WON'T WORRY ABOUT IT EITHER.
OH, SEMPAI!
I WAS SO SURPRISED WHEN I HEARD FROM MIKARIN!
OH, YAZAWA, LONG TIME NO SEE!
SO YOU'RE ALL BETTER NOW?
THAT'S RIGHT!
わーい

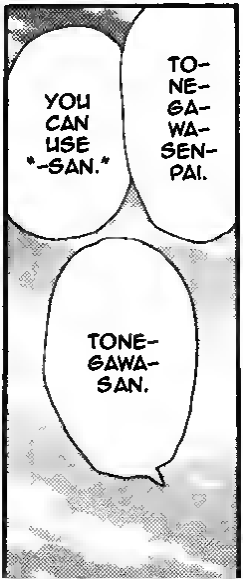
SHE REALLY DOES RESEMBLE HER.
EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE NOTHING ALIKE.
I TOOK A BREAK FROM SCHOOL FOR A YEAR.
SO I'M ACTUALLY ONE YEAR OLDER THAN EVERYONE ELSE.
OH
UM, WOULD...
ALL-RIGHT, WELL.
I'M HEADING HOME.
SEE YOU TOMORROW!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO WALK HOME TO-GETHER?
...OH
SURE.



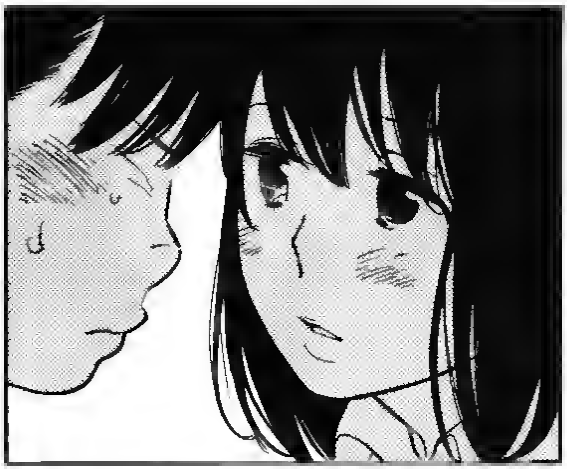
占いの館
FORTUNE TELLER



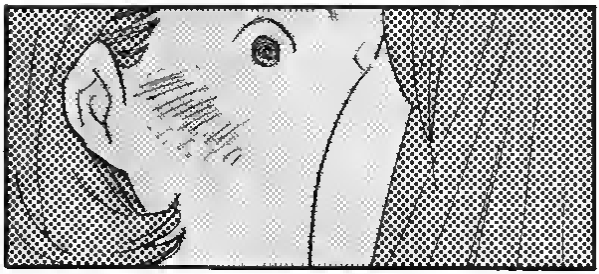


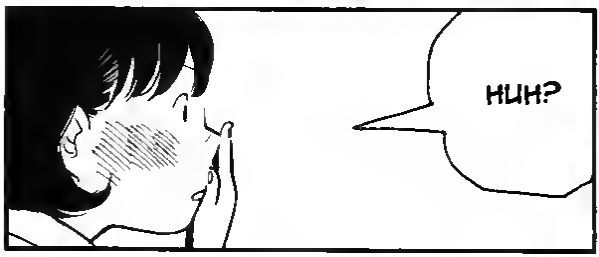


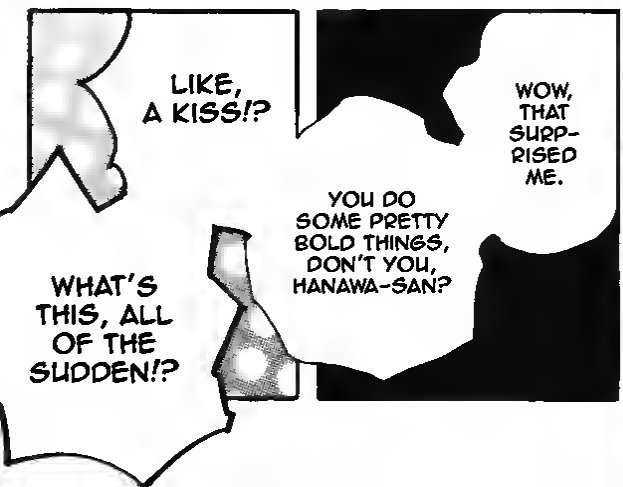
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE SOUND OF MY VOICE COULD BE SO USE-FUL?
YOU MUST LOVE YOUR SISTER A LOT, HUH?
AH HA HA
SURE!
AH!
COULD YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES?
I'M STILL ALIVE AND HEAL-THY!
HEY, IT'S JUST ME!
OKAY?
DID I HIT A NERVE? SORRY!
SORRY, SORRY!



W-
WHY?

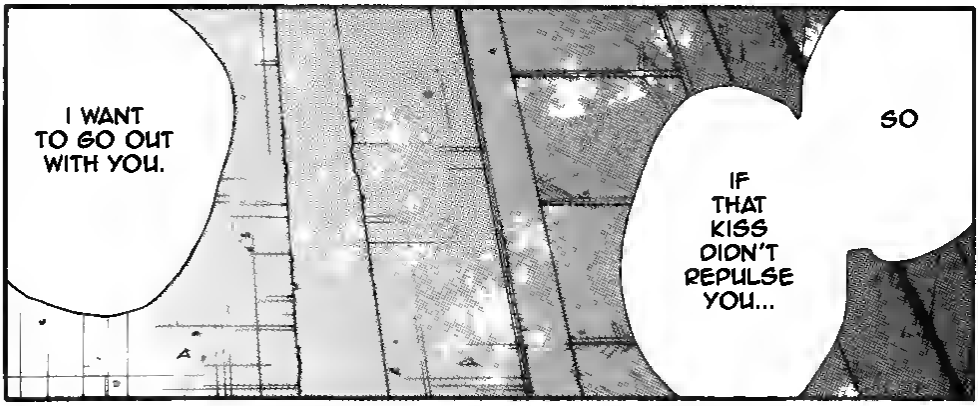



HUH?


LIKE, A KISS!?
WOW, THAT SURP-RISED ME.
YOU DO SOME PRETTY BOLD THINGS, DON'T YOU, HANAWA-SAN?
WHAT'S THIS, ALL OF THE SUDDEN!?

I LIKE YOU, TONE-GAWA-SAN.

SORRY, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEST TO GO FOR IT BEFORE I SECOND GUESSED MYSELF.


I WANT TO GO OUT WITH YOU.
SO IF THAT KISS DIDN'T REPULSE YOU...

WHICH MEANS, THAT'S WHY YOU KISSED ME.
WHICH MEANS...
UM, WELL, HOLD ON A MIN-UTE...
THIS IS JUST BECAUSE MY VOICE REMINDS YOU OF YOUR LITTLE SISTER, RIGHT?

WOW!
YOU REALLY DON'T BEAT AROUND THE BUSH.

YEAH.
I LIKED MY SISTER.
THAT'S WEIRD, ISN'T IT?
TO HARBOR ROMANTIC FEELINGS FOR SOMEONE WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE ME...
SAHO SAID THAT, TOO.
YOU'RE PRETTY MESSED UP, AREN'T YOU?
I GET THAT A LOT.
WHAT A WEIRD GIRL YOU ARE!
HOLD ON.
BUT I'M A LITTLE CURIOUS, SO, JUST HYPOTHETICALLY...
THAT'S WHY YOU WANT TO DATE ME?
HMM, WELL, ALL RIGHT.

IF YOU CAN BACK OFF WHEN I FEEL THINGS ARE GETTING TOO HEATED...
THAT KISS WASN'T SO BAD, SO...
WELL...
I GUESS WOULDN'T KNOW IF IT WERE GOOD OR BAD, THOUGH.
SINCE IT WAS MY FIRST KISS.
I'M SORRY.
MAN... I COULD JUST DIE OF EMBARR-ASSMENT

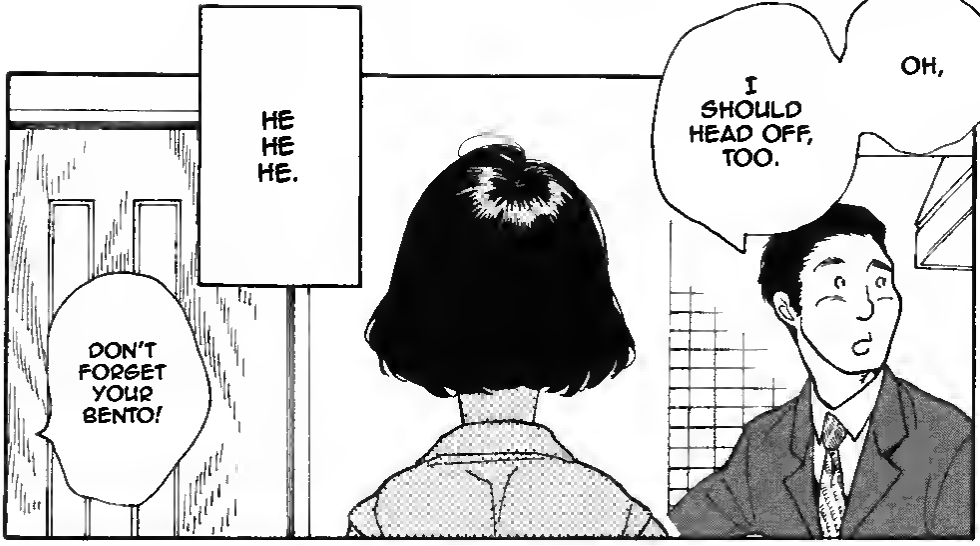
THANK YOU.
I FELT THAT MY MEETING TONEGAWA-SAN
WAS A CHANCE TO THINK ABOUT SAHO IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT.

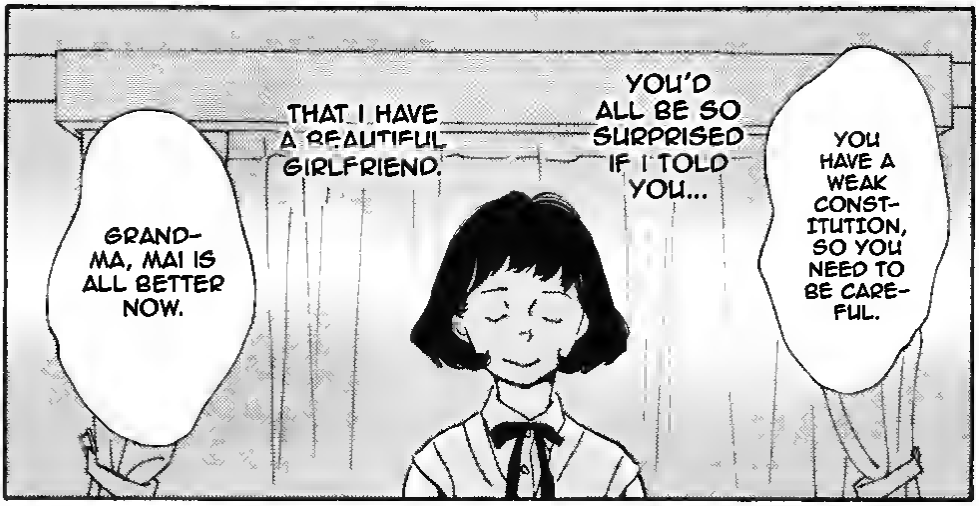
わがままちえちゃん

Wagamama Chiechan

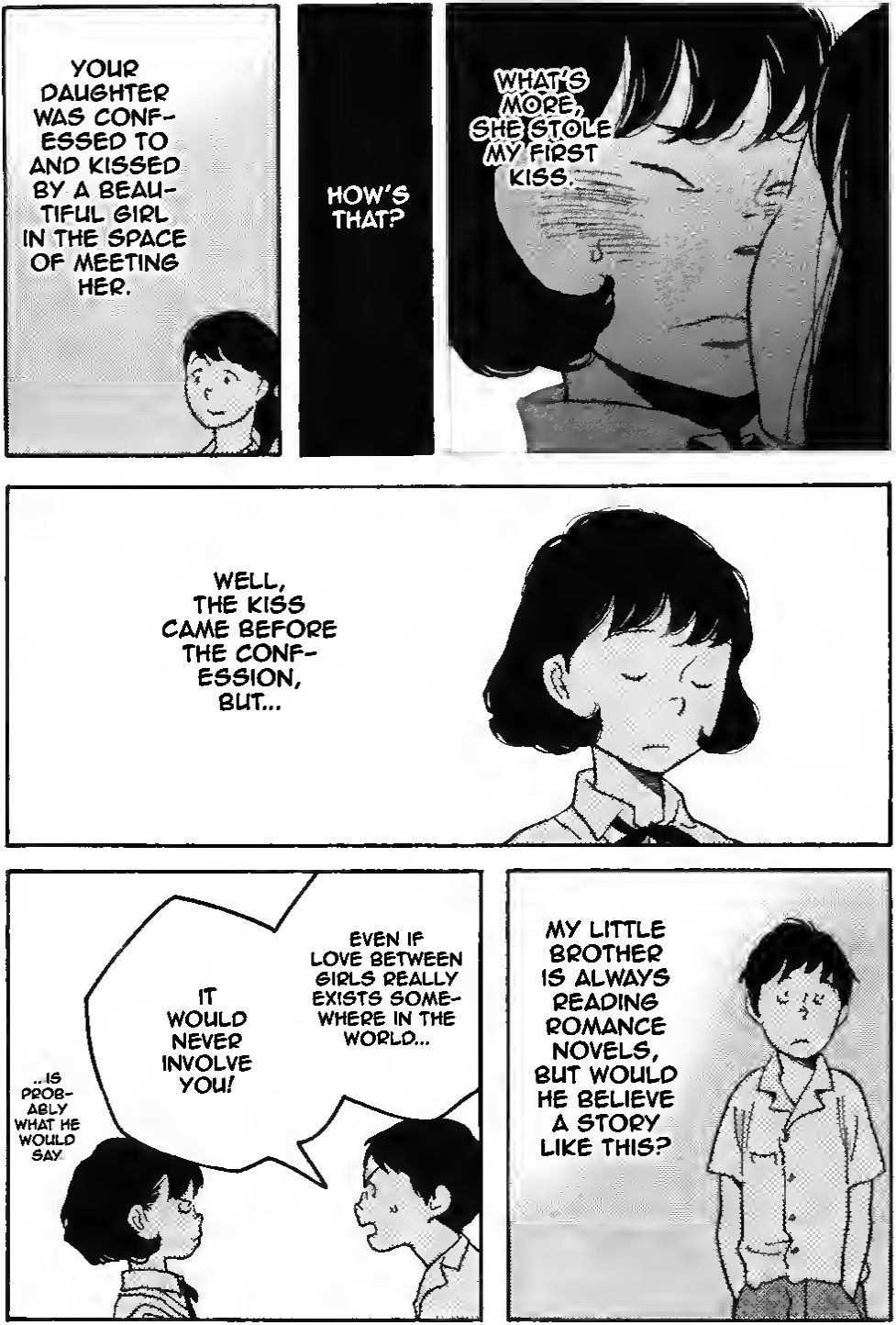
GOOD MORN-ING.
OH, YOU'RE UP EARLY!
IT'S 'CAUSE I'VE GOTTA MAKE AN APPEAR-ANCE AT MORNING PRATICE.
MAI-CHAN, DON'T PUSH YOUR-SELF.
I'LL BE FIIIINE.
I'M JUST MAKING AN APP-EARANCE.
I'M ALMOST DONE MAKING YOUR BENTO. CAN YOU WAIT A LITTLE BIT?
I'VE GOT TIME.
HEY, CAN I EAT THIS?
GO FOR IT. IT'S ALL YOURS.
DID YOU ALREADY EAT?
HERE'S YOUR BENTO!
I'VE GOT MORNING PRATICE, TOO.

CHAPTER 7

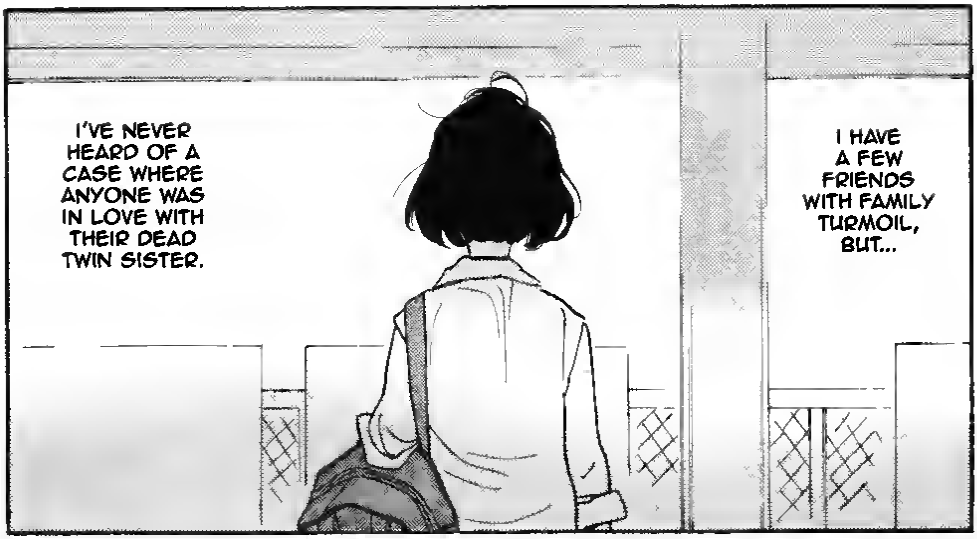

HE HE HE.
DON'T FORGET YOUR BENTO!
I SHOULD HEAD OFF, TOO.
OH,

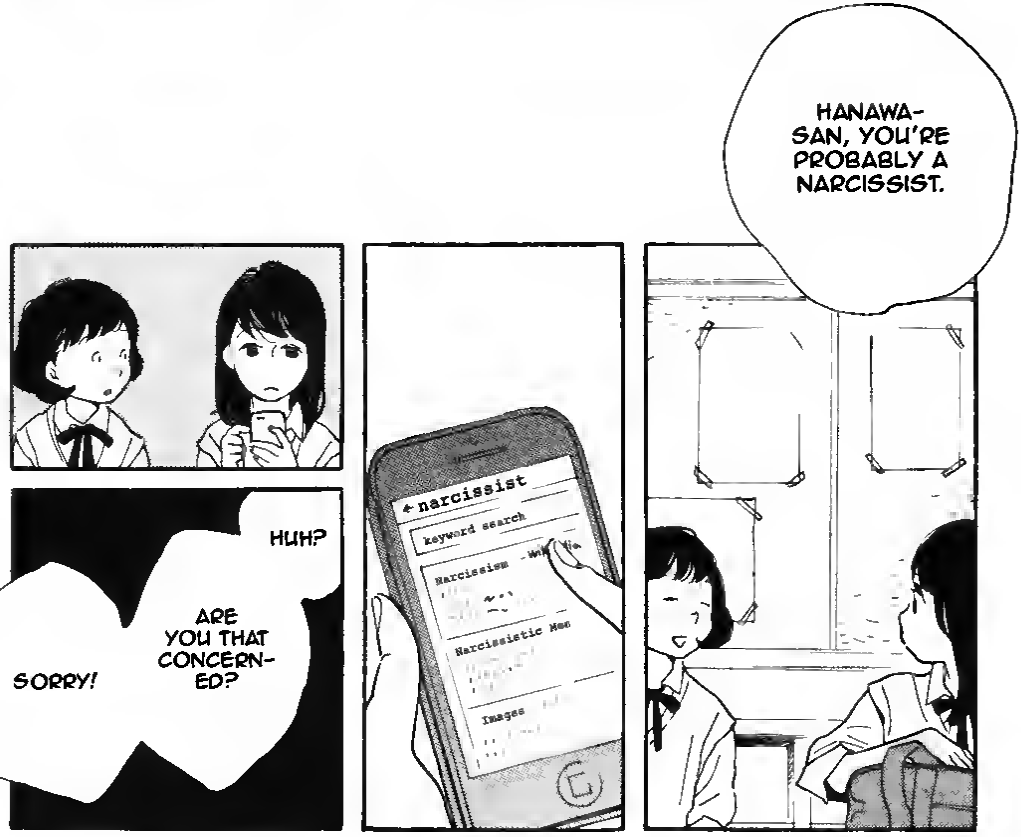

GRAND-MA, MAI IS ALL BETTER NOW.
THAT I HAVE A BEAUTIFUL GIRLFRIEND.
YOU'D ALL BE SO SURPRISED IF I TOLD YOU...
YOU HAVE A WEAK CONST-ITUTION, SO YOU NEED TO BE CARE-FUL.

IN ANY CASE, I CAN'T EVEN BELIEVE IT MYSELF~
YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE IT.


YOUR DAUGHTER WAS CONFESSED TO AND KISSED BY A BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE SPACE OF MEETING HER.
HOW'S THAT?
WHAT'S MORE, SHE STOLE MY FIRST KISS.
WELL, THE KISS CAME BEFORE THE CONFESSION, BUT...
EVEN IF LOVE BETWEEN GIRLS REALLY EXISTS SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD...
IT WOULD NEVER INVOLVE YOU!
...IS PROBABLY WHAT HE WOULD SAY.
MY LITTLE BROTHER IS ALWAYS READING ROMANCE NOVELS, BUT WOULD HE BELIEVE A STORY LIKE THIS?

I PROBABLY WOULDN'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT IF HE GOT A GIRLFRIEND, EITHER.
...HE'D PROBABLY SAY, AND GET ANGRY.
BESIDES, I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY-THING ABOUT YOUR FIRST KISS, SO KEEP IT TO YOURSELF!
YEAH..
UGH
GROSS!
I'M HEADING OUT!
WELL, ANYWAY, I THINK WE ALL GET ALONG AS A FAMILY.
AFTER ALL, EVEN THOUGH SHE HAS PARENTS, SHE LIVES WITH HER AUNT
IT'S JUST A GUESS, BUT I'LL BET HANA-WA-SAN'S FAMILY IS PRETTY DYSFUNC-TIONAL.


I'VE NEVER HEARD OF A CASE WHERE ANYONE WAS IN LOVE WITH THEIR DEAD TWIN SISTER.
I HAVE A FEW FRIENDS WITH FAMILY TURMOIL, BUT...


HANAWA-SAN, YOU'RE PROBABLY A NARCISSIST.
narcissist
keyword search
Narcissism
Narcissistic Man
Images
HUH?
ARE YOU THAT CONCERN-ED?
SORRY!

OH, ARE YOU NOT ALLOWED TO BUY FOOD FROM THE CAFETERIA?
IT'S NOT THAT...
WANNA GRAB A BITE?
I'M STARVING
HEY, NO WORRIES! I'LL BUY A COKE AND SOME FRIES, OKAY?
I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY.
AH
I JUST REMEMBERED, I NEVER COLLECTED MY PAY FROM MY PART-TIME JOB.

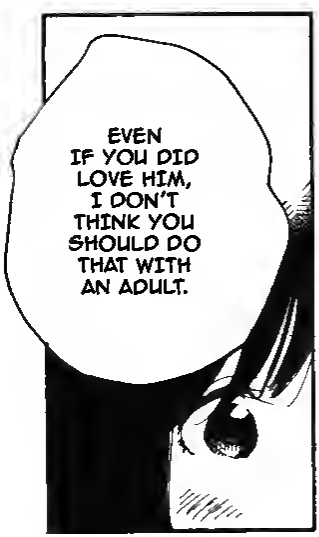
OH!
占い
MUST BE NICE.
I WANT TO HAVE A PART TIME JOB TOO, BUT MY PARENTS ARE AGAINST IT.
HUH?
I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER COME BACK...
I'M HERE TO GET MY PAY.
HEY.
HANAWA-SAN, IT'S BEEN SO LONG!
OH...
I ALREADY GAVE IT TO YOU, DIDN'T I?
THE LAST TIME YOU CAME IN...
REMEMBER...?

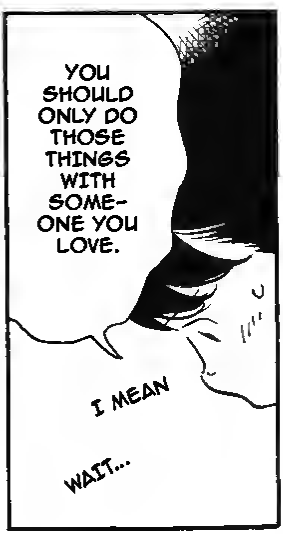
THAT'S GREAT!
REALLY?
OKAY, WELL I'LL COME BY AND WORK AGAIN LATER.
WHAT EXACTLY DOES A FORTUNE TELLER'S ASSISTANT DO?
OH, IS THIS A FRIEND OF YOURS?
KUBOTA-SAN PAYS ME TO HAVE SEX WITH HIM.

N-NO!
BECAUSE, HANAWA-SAN AND I ARE DATING...
ISN'T THAT A CRIME!? ISN'T THAT PROSTITUTION!?
WHAT THE HELL, YOU SERIOUSLY MEANT TO DATE HER?
HUH!?
AREN'T YOU AN ADULT!? SHE'S A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL!
YOU'RE DISGUSTING!
WAIT.

YOU COULDN'T EVEN SEE SAHO AT ALL.
HAH, SEE!!
I DON'T REMEMBER THAT BEING A THING THOUGH...
WAS THAT DAT-ING?

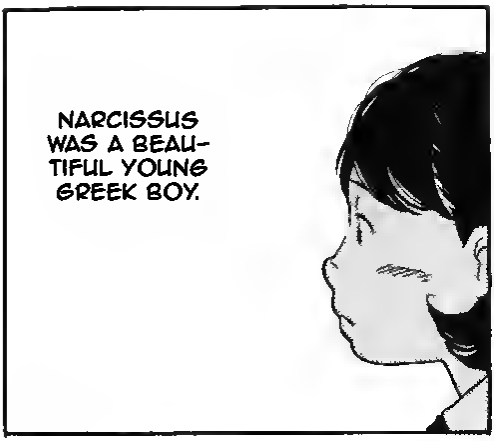
I MEAN!
GEEZ, YOU NEED TO TELL ME ABOUT THESE THINGS!
I MEAN...
MCDONALD'S MENU

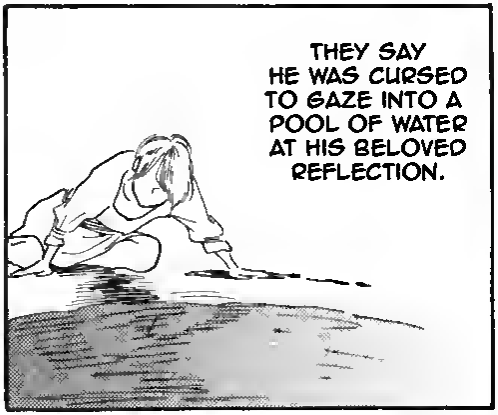

EVEN IF YOU DID LOVE HIM, I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD DO THAT WITH AN ADULT.

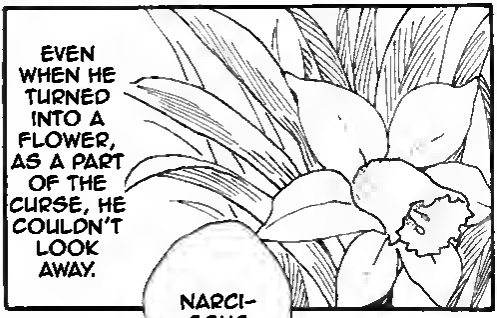

YOU SHOULD ONLY DO THOSE THINGS WITH SOME-ONE YOU LOVE.
I MEAN
WAIT...

そおおおお
GEEEZ
TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR-SELF...

THEN, I'LL DO IT WITH YOU.
ALSO, CAN I CALL YOU "MAI-CHAN"?
I THINK I CAN SEE WHY THAT GUY FROM BEFORE WAS SO TAKEN WITH HER...


NARCISSUS WAS A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GREEK BOY.


THEY SAY HE WAS CURSED TO GAZE INTO A POOL OF WATER AT HIS BELOVED REFLECTION.

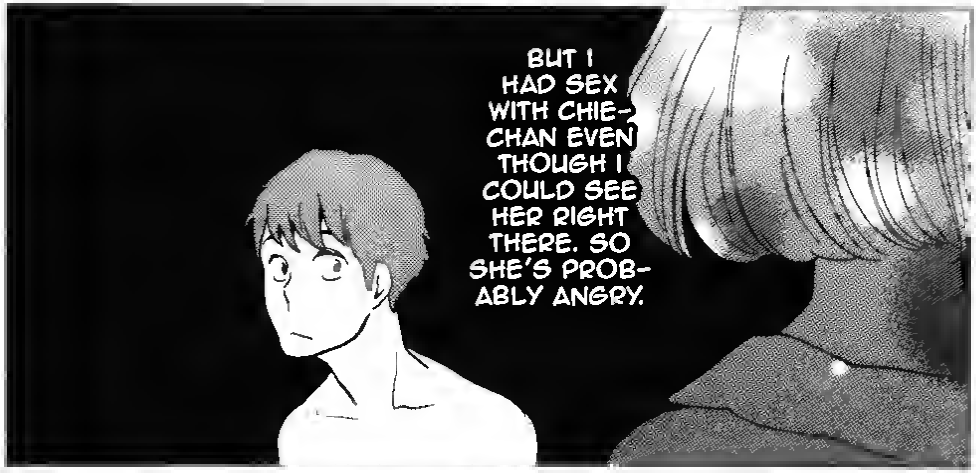

EVEN WHEN HE TURNED INTO A FLOWER, AS A PART OF THE CURSE, HE COULDN'T LOOK AWAY.

NARCISSUS FLOWERS ARE SO PRETTY, THOUGH.

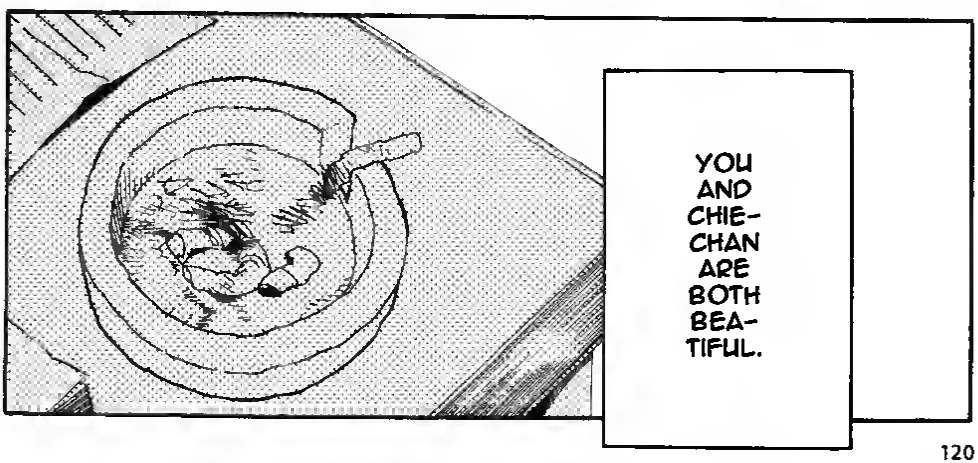
THIS FEELS SO NICE....
IT'S JUST LIKE I'M BEING SCOLDED BY SAHO.

MAN...
202
I WONDER IF I'LL BE ARRESTED?
NOPE, THAT'S A LIE.
I KNEW SHE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.
BUT
IT'S JUST THAT HANAWA-SAN LOOKED SO ADULT, I COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN...

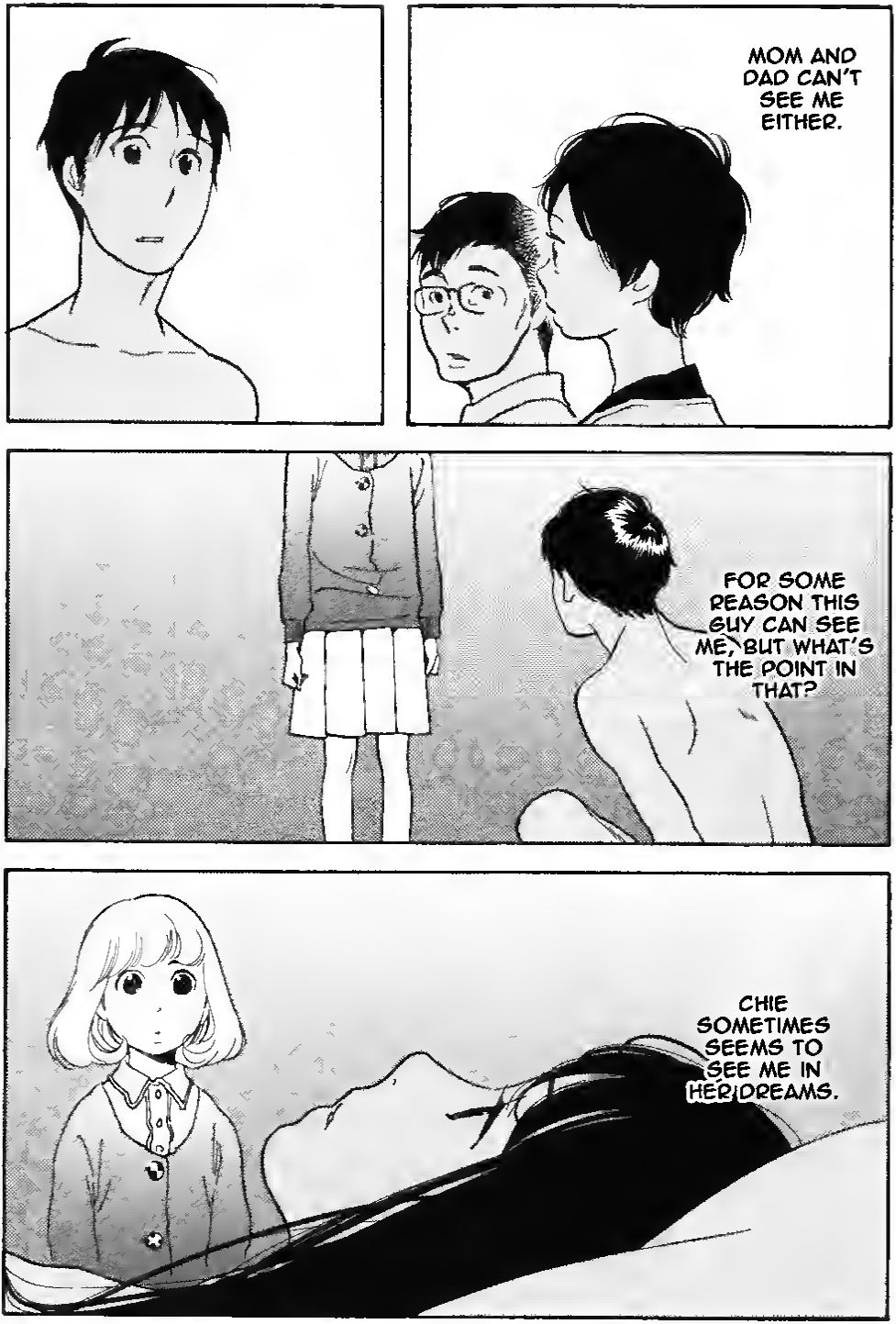
SHE SAID SHE DOESN'T REMEMBER THAT, THOUGH...
WERE WE DATING?
SHE SAID IT SO RESOLUTELY, TOO.
YOU COULDN'T EVEN SEE SAHO AT ALL.
I DID SEE HER, THOUGH.

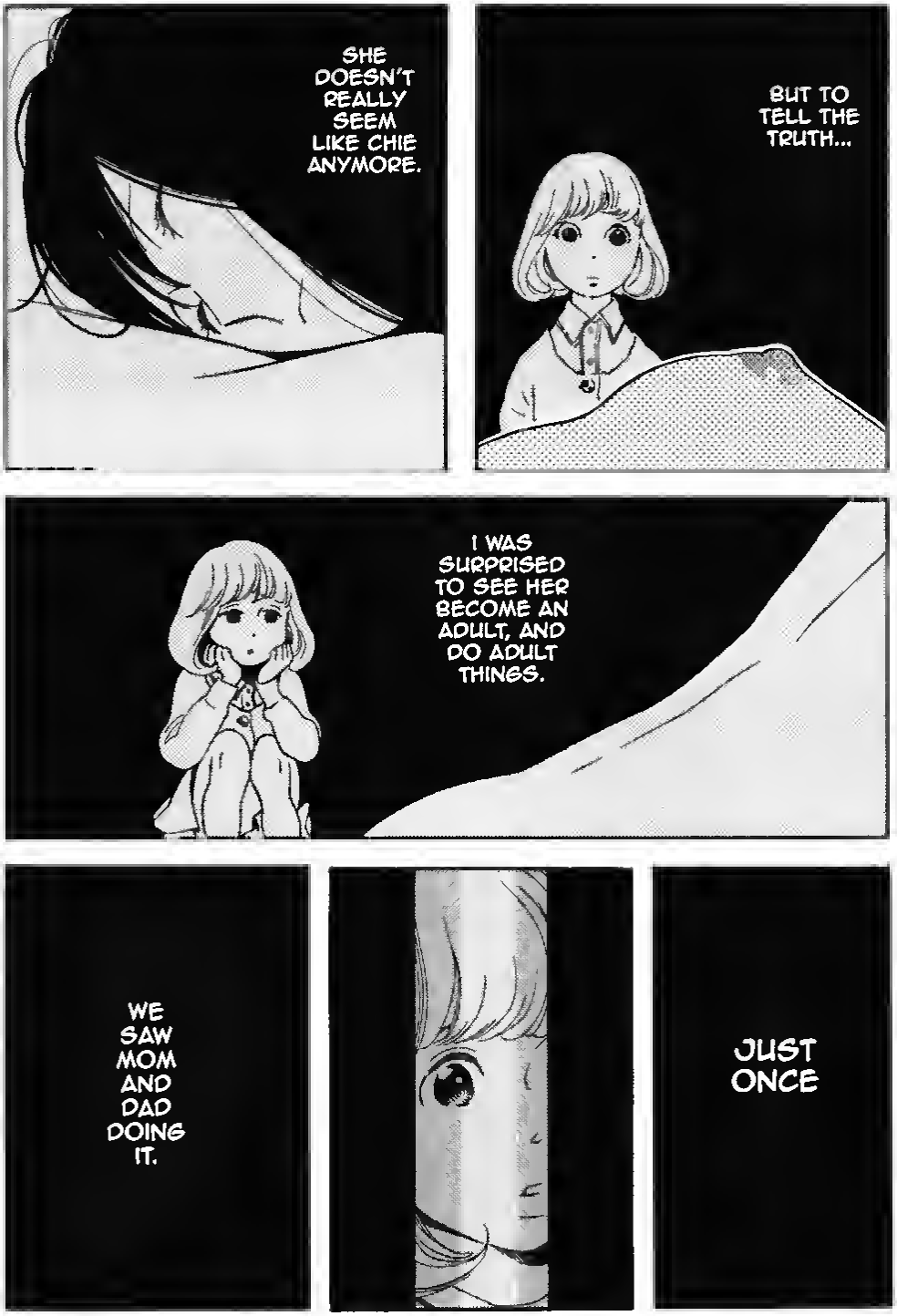

BUT I HAD SEX WITH CHIE-CHAN EVEN THOUGH I COULD SEE HER RIGHT THERE. SO SHE'S PROB-ABLY ANGRY.

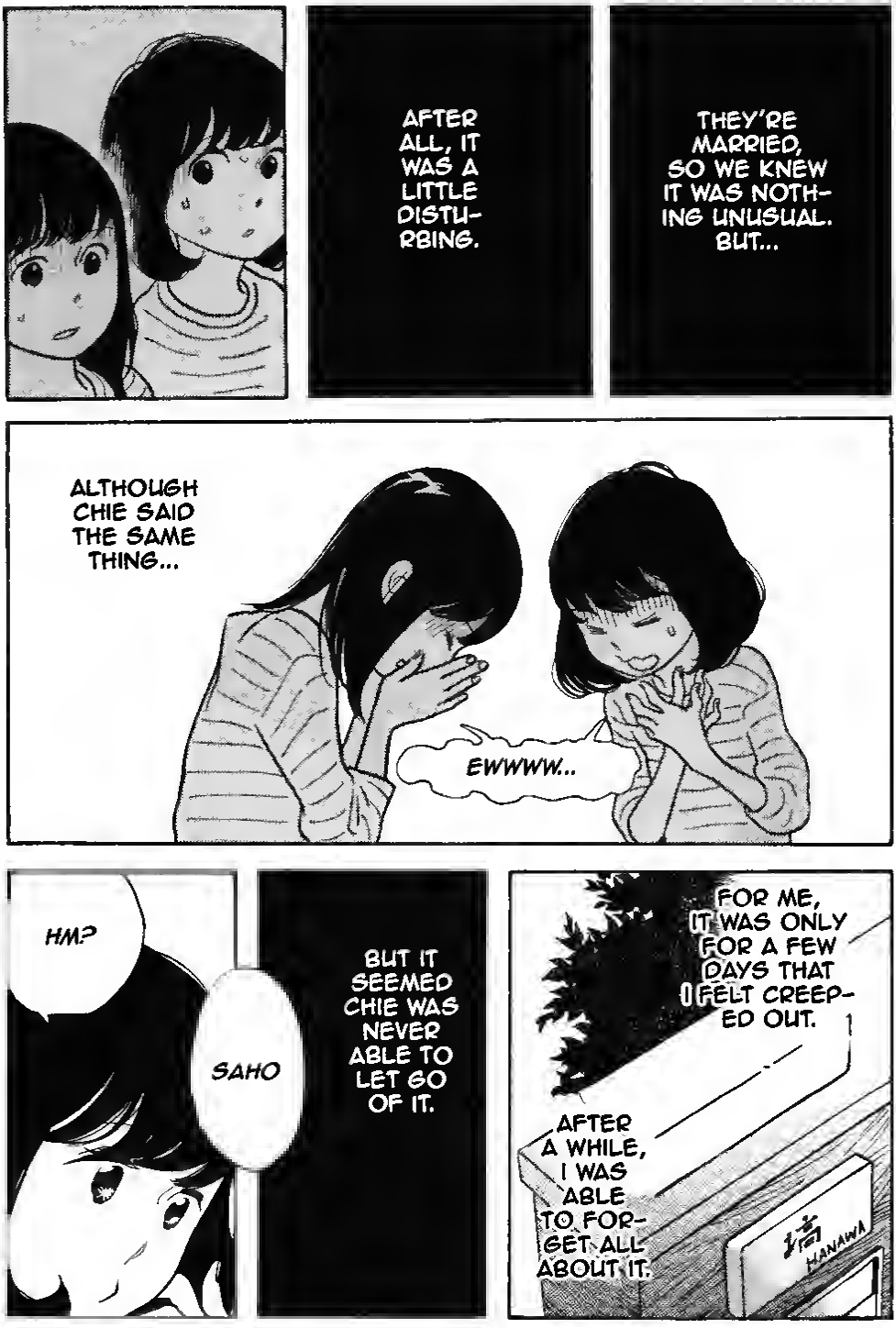
OH WELL. IF I GET KILL-ED BY SOME CURSE, IT'S JUST AS WELL.
SORRY.


YOU AND CHIE-CHAN ARE BOTH BEA-TIFUL.

CHIE CAN'T SEE ME AT ALL.
IT CAN'T BE HELPED. AFTER ALL, MOST PEOPLE CAN'T SEE ME.
CHAPTER 8

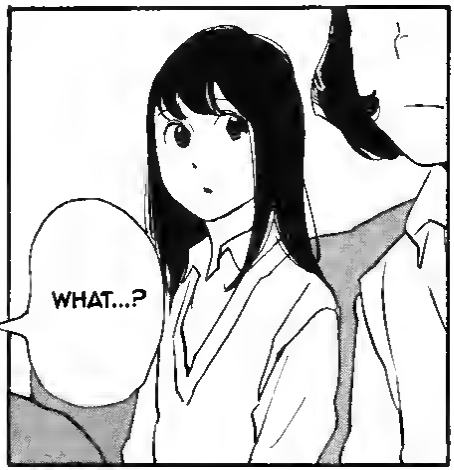

MOM AND DAD CAN'T SEE ME EITHER.
FOR SOME REASON THIS GUY CAN SEE ME, BUT WHAT'S THE POINT IN THAT?
CHIE SOMETIMES SEEMS TO SEE ME IN HER DREAMS.

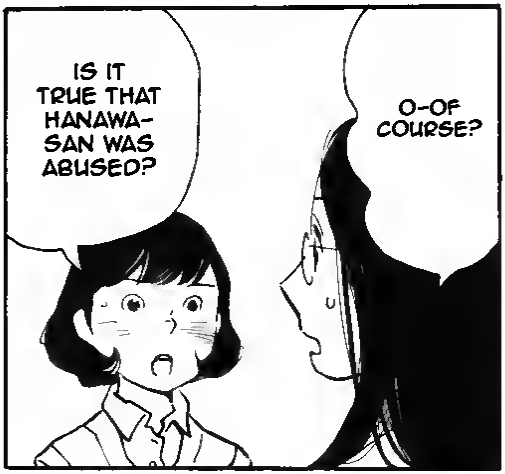

SHE DOESN'T REALLY SEEM LIKE CHIE ANYMORE.
BUT TO TELL THE TRUTH...
I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE HER BECOME AN ADULT, AND DO ADULT THINGS.
WE SAW MOM AND DAD DOING IT.
JUST ONCE


AFTER ALL, IT WAS A LITTLE DISTURBING.
THEY'RE MARRIED, SO WE KNEW IT WAS NOTHING UNUSUAL. BUT...
ALTHOUGH CHIE SAID THE SAME THING...
EWWWW...
HM?
SAHO
BUT IT SEEMED CHIE WAS NEVER ABLE TO LET GO OF IT.
FOR ME, IT WAS ONLY FOR A FEW DAYS THAT I FELT CREEPED OUT.
AFTER A WHILE, I WAS ABLE TO FORGET ALL ABOUT IT.
HANAWA

I WONDER IF CHIE STILL HATES THEM...?
I THINK I MIGHT KIND OF HATE MOM AND DAD...
SORRY YOU HAVE TO SEE MY MESSY HAIR.
OH, MY!
THIS IS TONEGAWA MAI-SAN.
NICE TO MEET YOU
OH, HELLO?
CHIE BROUGHT HOME A FRIEND!
COME IN, COME IN!
SORRY FOR INTRUDING

UM
MAY I SPEAK FREELY?


WHAT...?


O-OF COURSE?
IS IT TRUE THAT HANAWA-SAN WAS ABUSED?

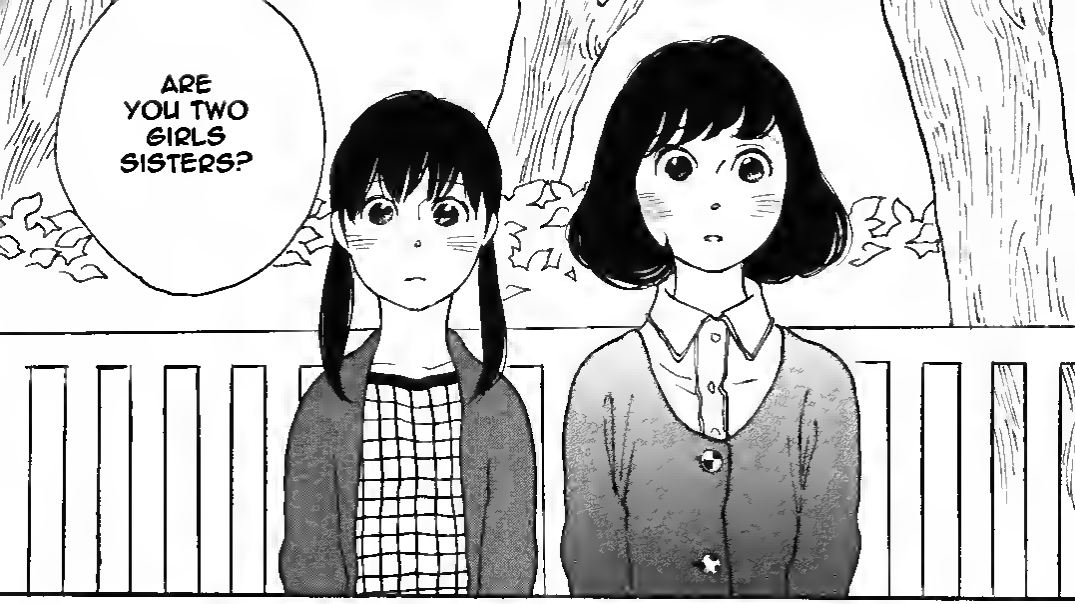
OH... WHEN I SAID "HANAWA-SAN," I DIDN'T MEAN CHIE-SAN. I MEANT SAHO-SAN.
HER LITTLE SISTER WHO PA-SSED AWAY.

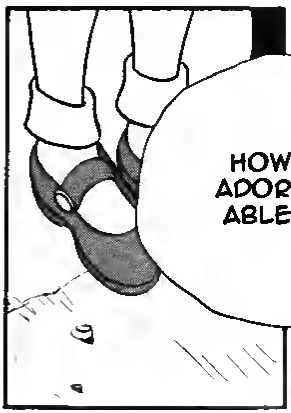
IS THAT TRUE, CHIE?

THAT'S... DID CHIE TELL YOU THAT?
YES. THAT'S WHY SHE HATES HER PARENTS, SHE SAYS.

I DIED.
IN A TRAFFIC ACCI-DENT.

DO YOU KNOW HOW TO GET TO SUGANUMA HOSPITAL?
BEFORE I DIED, I GOT IN A FIGHT WITH CHIE.
SUGANUMA HOSPITAL? GO STRAIGHT DOWN THIS ROAD...
AND WHEN IT TURNS INTO THE BIG ROAD, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE SIGN.
AH, I SEE. THAT'S GOOD!
ISN'T THAT A RELIEF? WE DIDN'T MAKE A WRONG TURN.
THANK YOU, YOUNG MISS.
OH, MY!

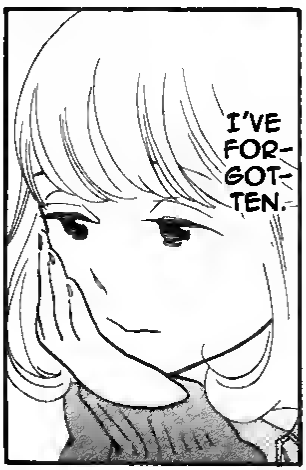




I DIDN'T MEAN IT.

I'M SORRY, CHIE.

"I HATE YOU," I SAID.

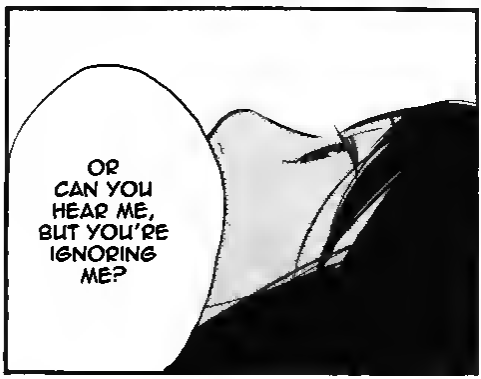


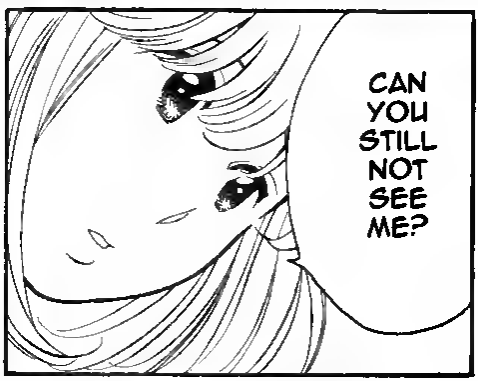
WAS I IN AN AFTER-NOON HAZE?
BUT I WONDER IF IT WAS BECAUSE I'D GONE AND SAID SUCH A CRUEL THING?
柿谷そろばん塾
BYE, SEN-SEI!
BE CARE-FUL ON YOUR WAY HOME!
CHIE-CHAN, LET'S WALK HOME TO-GETHER!
OKAY.
HM? WHERE'S SAHO-CHAN TODAY?
I DON'T CARE.
OOH, YOU MUST HAVE GOT-TEN INTO A FIGHT, HUH?
NUH UH!
NO, I'M TO-TALLY RIGHT.

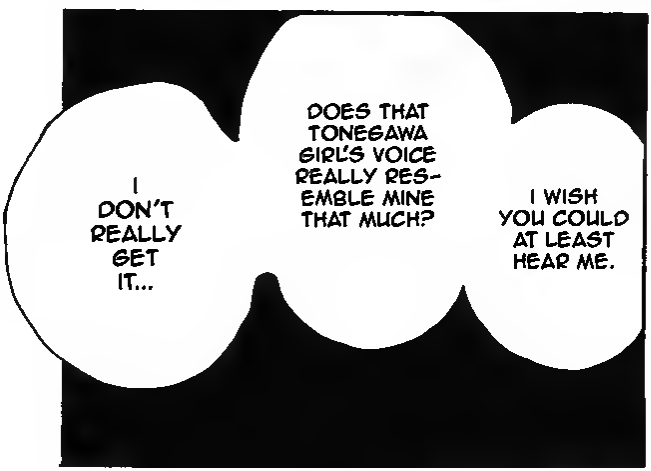
THEY SAID THERE'S AN ACCI-DENT.
FOR REAL?
DANG, THE ROAD'S TOTALLY CLOSED OFF.
LET'S TAKE A DETOUR.
WAS IT A PUNISHMENT, I WONDER?

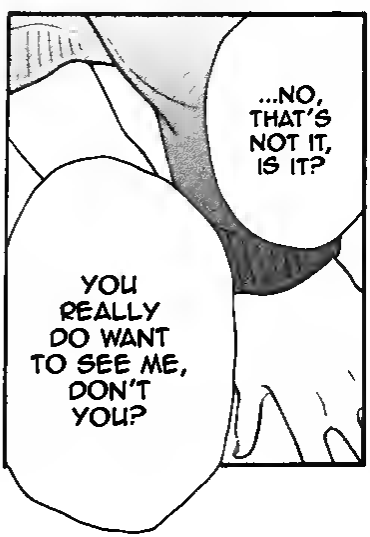
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
SAHO DIED HATING ME.
IT WAS MY FAULT THAT SAHO DIED.
DAD?
MOM?
CHIE
CHIE
UGH...

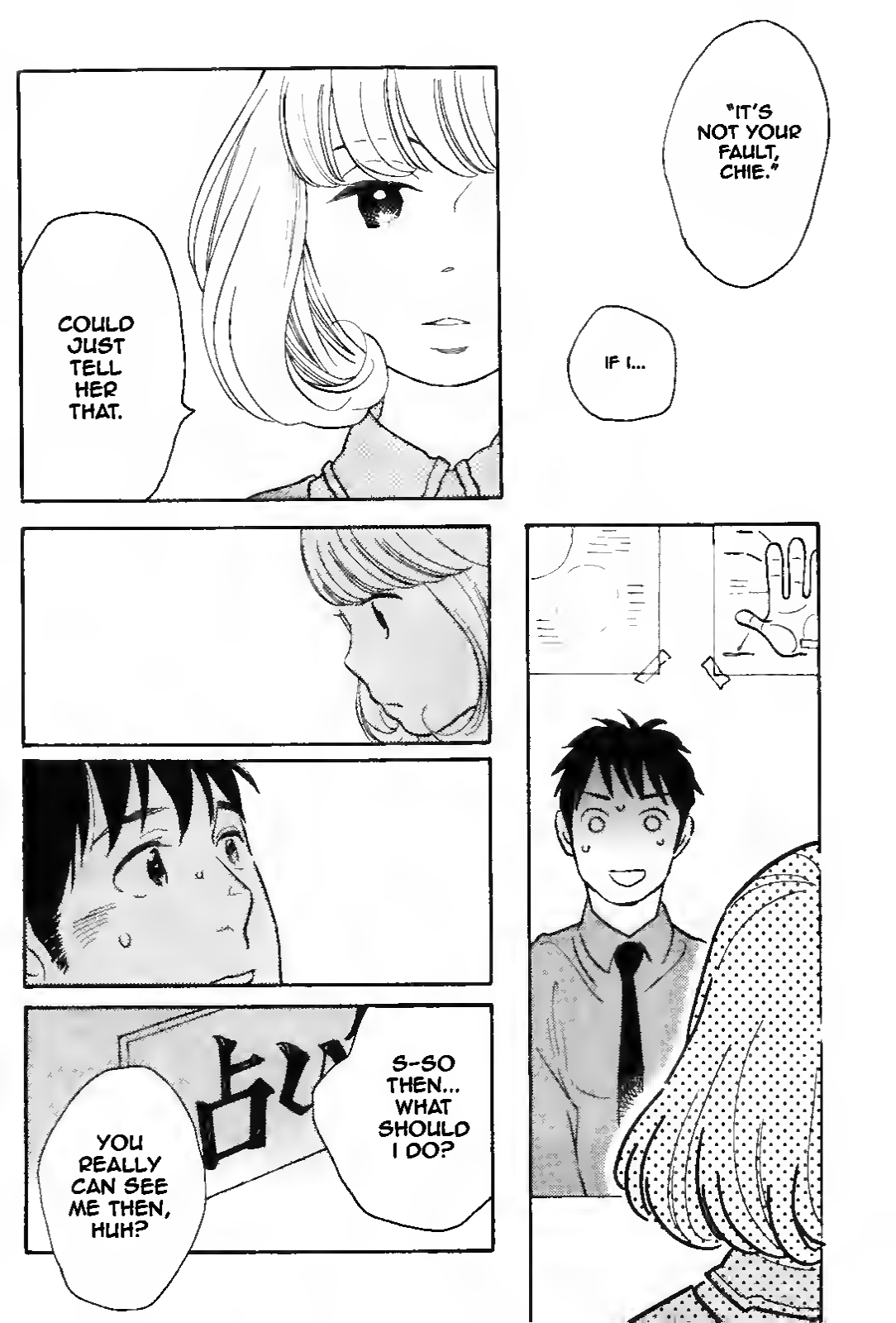
CHIEEE
CHIE!
HEY


OR CAN YOU HEAR ME, BUT YOU'RE IGNORING ME?


CAN YOU STILL NOT SEE ME?


I DON'T REALLY GET IT...
DOES THAT TONEGAWA GIRL'S VOICE REALLY RESEMBLE MINE THAT MUCH?
I WISH YOU COULD AT LEAST HEAR ME.


...NO, THAT'S NOT IT, IS IT?
YOU REALLY DO WANT TO SEE ME, DON'T YOU?


"IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, CHIE."
IF I...
COULD JUST TELL HER THAT.
S-SO THEN... WHAT SHOULD I DO?
YOU REALLY CAN SEE ME THEN, HUH?

YOU HAD SEX WITH HER?
I... WITH YOUR OLDER SISTER...
YOU ALWAYS STARE AT ME, SO I WAS PRETTY CERTAIN...
...SORRY.
I DON'T REALLY CARE ABOUT THAT.
CHIE IS ALREADY AN ADULT, AFTER ALL.
WHY ARE YOU CRY-ING!?
IT'S JUST
I WAS THINKING, YOU WERE ONLY A GRADE SCHOOL-ER WHEN YOU DIED...
THIS JUST HIT ME NOW...

BUT NOW

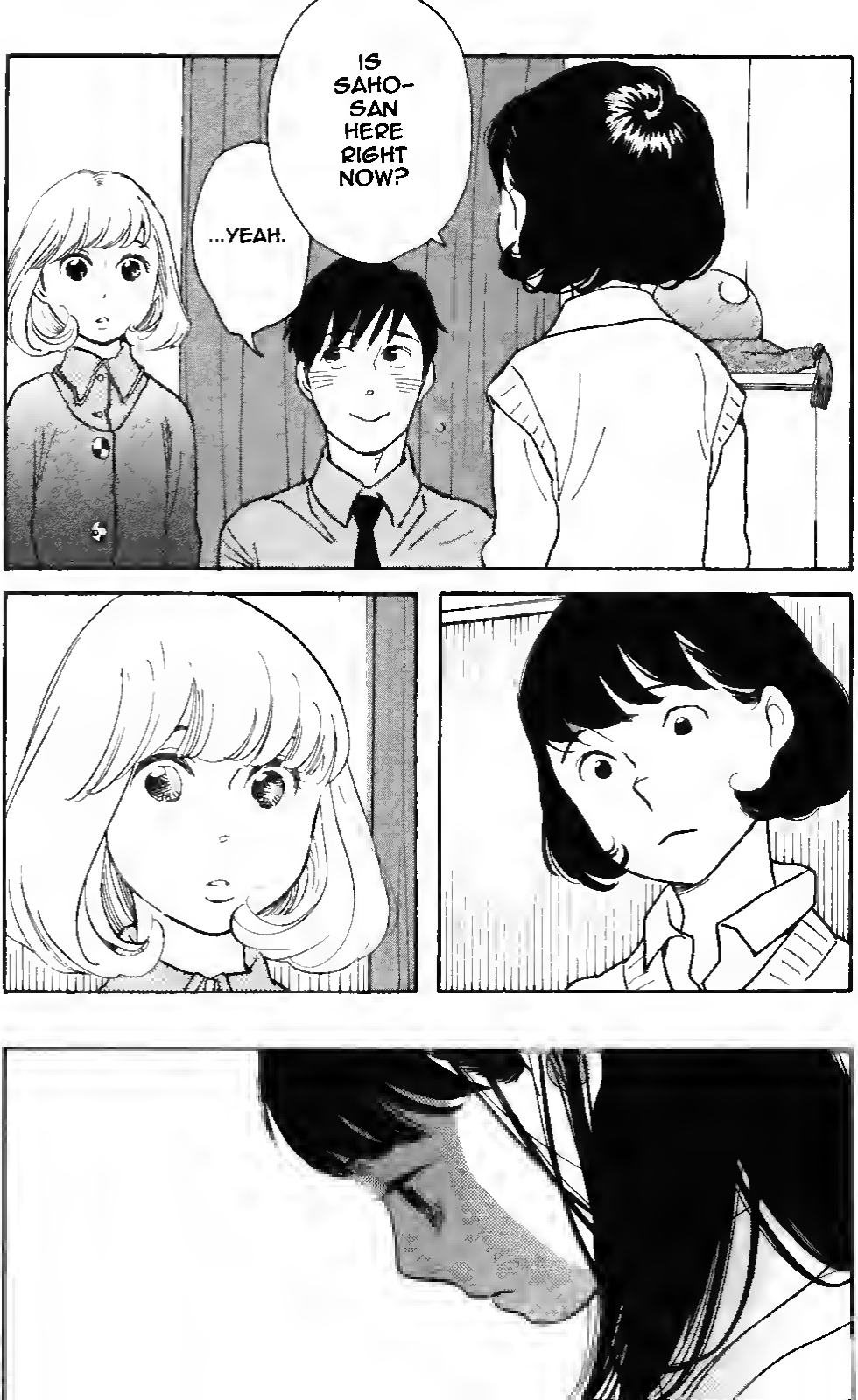
THERE'S NO ONE TO TURN TO BUT YOU.

CHAPTER 9

DO YOU BELIEVE ME?
THAT YOU AND SAHO-CHAN WENT TO THE NIGHT FAIR TOGETHER, AND YOUR MOM GOT ANGRY AT YOU... THAT'S SOMETHING YOU NEVER TOLD ME ABOUT.
W-WELL? WHAT DO YOU THINK?
DOES EVERYTHING HE'S SAID UP TO NOW FIT?

ARE YOU SAYING I'VE BEEN LYING?
CLATTER
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S LYING!
AH-
MAN... SHE'S REALLY MAD.
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN HANAWA-SAN SO EMOTIONAL.
THAT-

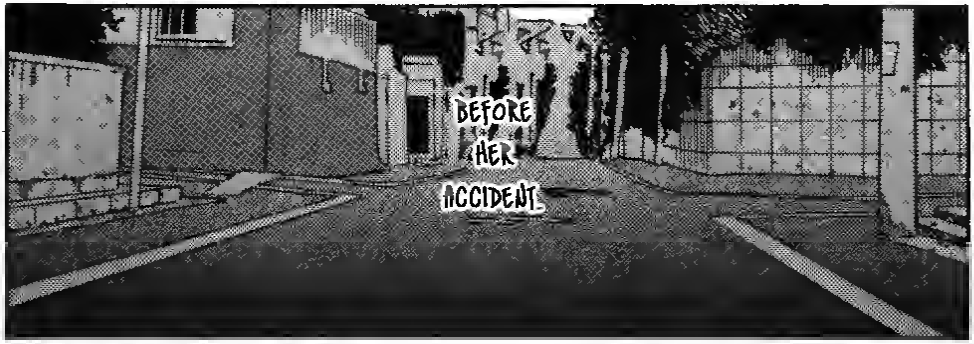
GLAD ...
I'M KIND OF...
THAT'S TRUE! IT'S REALLY REFRESHING!
P-PLEASE NO!
DON'T FORGET, I CAN REPORT YOU TO THE POLICE AT ANY TIME!
I'M SORRY! DON'T DO IT, PLEASE
SO DON'T PUSH ME!
UGH, YOU'RE SO CREEPY.
YOU STILL HAVEN'T GIVEN UP?
N-
NO, IT'S...


IS SAHO-SAN HERE RIGHT NOW?
...YEAH.

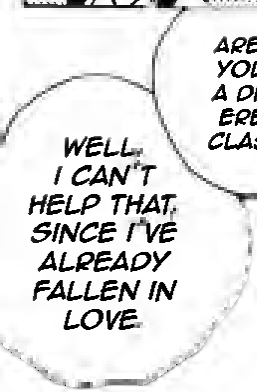
THERE WAS A PART OF ME THAT BELIEVED THEM, AND A PART OF ME THAT THOUGHT, "THIS IS PROBABLY MADE UP."

ON SCHOOL TRIPS, WE'D GET ALL EXCITED TRADING THEM BEFORE BED.

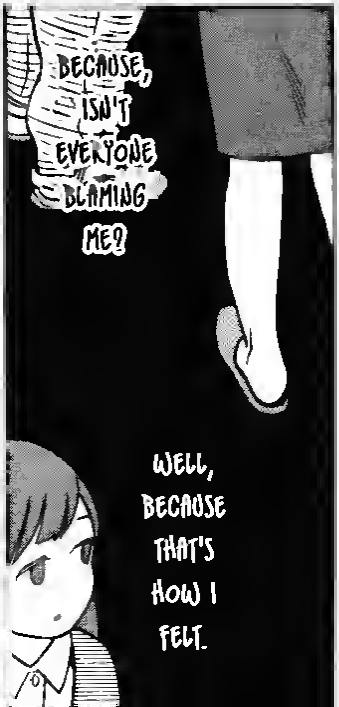
I'VE NEVER TALKED ABOUT THE FIGHT THAT SAHO AND I WERE IN...
I'VE BLAMED MYSELF, BUT...


BEFORE HER ACCIDENT.

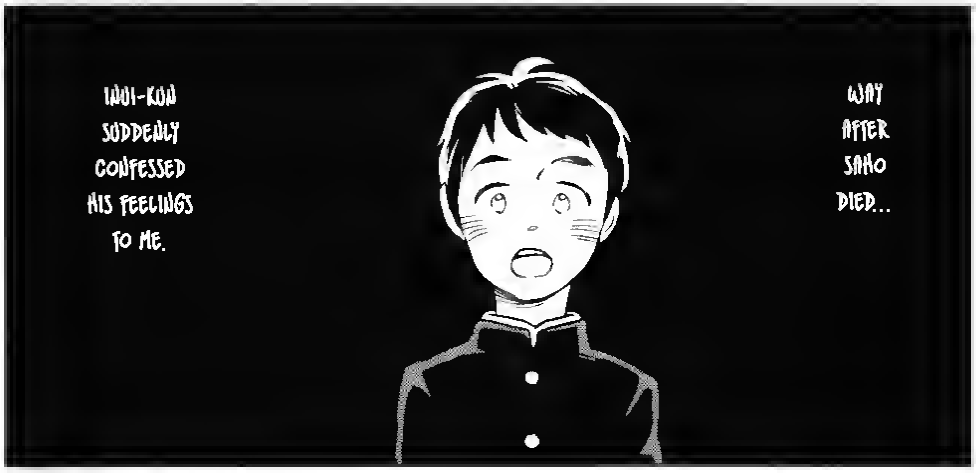
INUI-KUN?

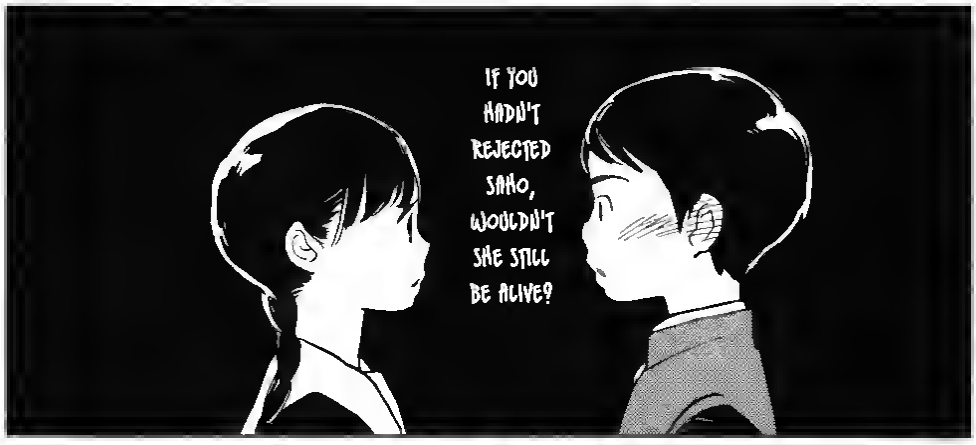

AREN'T YOU IN A DIFF-ERENT CLASS?
WELL, I CAN'T HELP THAT. SINCE I'VE ALREADY FALLEN IN LOVE.

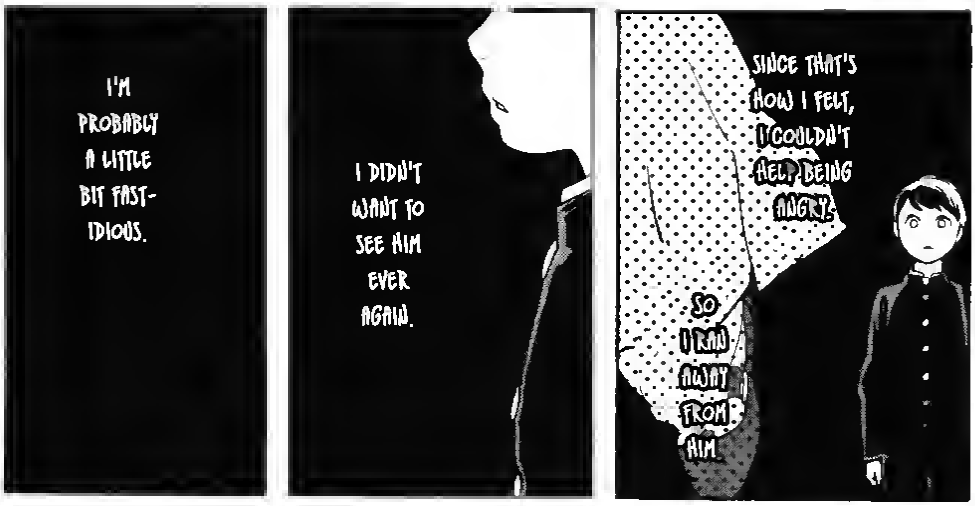
I GUESS NOW I SHOULD TELL YOU WHY SAHO AND I HAD BEEN FIGHTING.
IT STARTED OVER A BOY IN OUR GRADE.


BECAUSE, ISN'T EVERYONE BLAMING ME?
WELL, BECAUSE THAT'S HOW I FELT.

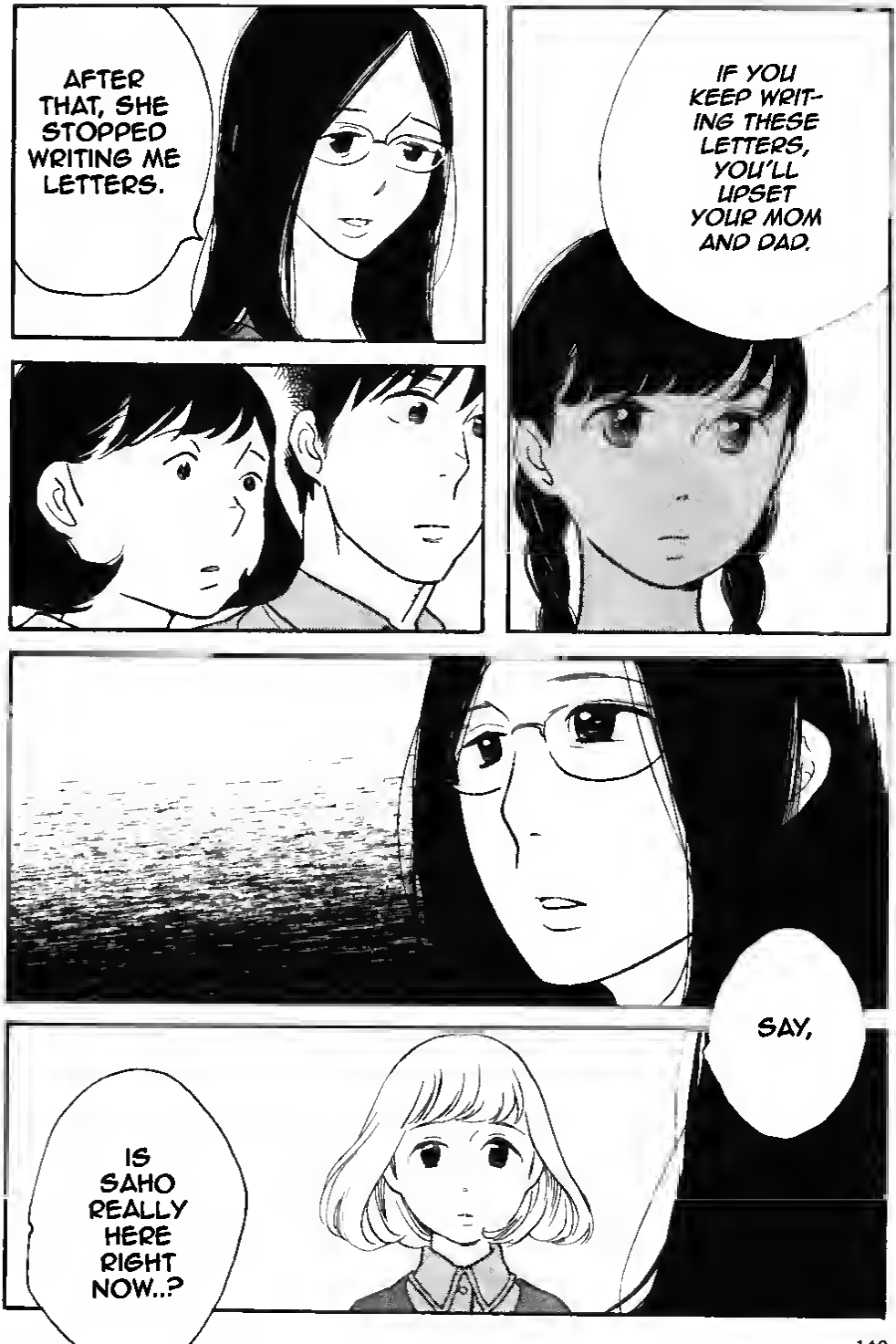
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID, BUT...
AFTER THAT, SHE MUST HAVE CONFESSED TO HIM.
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL HIM?
HMM... I'M NOT SURE...
OH, I GET IT!
IT'S BECAUSE HE'S COME OVER TO OUR HOUSE BEFORE, ISN'T IT?
GEEZ! LET'S JUST DROP IT!
FOR A GROUP PROJECT
THAT DAY, SAHO WAS A LITTLE ANGRY.
OH, HEY!
ABOUT THE SCHOOL TRIP NEXT WEEK...
CHIE.
SORRY, BUT...
I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE TALKING TO YOU TODAY.
HUH...? WHY?
I DON'T KNOW...
RIGHT NOW, I KIND OF HATE YOU JUST A LITTLE.
...


IWOI-KUN SUDDENLY CONFESSED HIS FEELINGS TO ME.
WAY AFTER SAHO DIED...


IF YOU HADN'T REJECTED SAHO, WOULDN'T SHE STILL BE ALIVE?


I'M PROBABLY A LITTLE BIT FAST-IDIOUS.
I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE HIM EVER AGAIN.
SINCE THAT'S HOW I FELT, I COULDN'T HELP BEING ANGRY.
SO I RAN AWAY FROM HIM.

SHE ALWAYS BLAMED HERSELF, BUT...
MAYBE IT WAS THAT SHE'D BECOME BITTER, BUT THE THINGS SHE WROTE BECAME DISTURBED.
I WAS REALLY SURPRISED BY YOUR LETTER.
YOU WOULD WRITE WELL IF YOU COULD COLLECT YOUR THOUGHTS, BUT...
THE WAY IT IS NOW, IT'S HARD TO FOLLOW WHAT IT IS YOU'RE SAYING.
BECAUSE, YOU DIDN'T KILL SAHO.
AND YOU DIDN'T LET HER DIE, EITHER.


AFTER THAT, SHE STOPPED WRITING ME LETTERS.
IF YOU KEEP WRITING THESE LETTERS, YOU'LL UPSET YOUR MOM AND DAD.
SAY,
IS SAHO REALLY HERE RIGHT NOW..?

HUH ...?
ARISA ...?
YAAY!
LONG TIME NO SEE!
IT REALLY IS YOU, CHIE!
I KNEW IT WAS YOU!
AH ...
CHIE ...?

YOU LOOK SO ADULT NOW, CHIE!
GEEZ, I WAS REALLY SURPRISED WHEN YOU WENT TO A DIFFERENT HIGH SCHOOL!
ARISA
UM...
WHAT I SAID ABOUT SALLY ...
I'M SORRY.
BACK THEN, I SAID SOME-THING CRUEL TO YOU ...

WHA...
OH.
BURSTS INTO TEARS
DON'T FORGET ABOUT SALL OKA
YOU REALLY DIDN'T SAY ANY-THING BAD.
MAN, HAVE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THAT ALL THIS TIME?
WHAT'S THIS, ALL OF THE SUDDEN?
I RE-MEMBER NOW!
HE'S GOT A LITTLE BROTHER, SO I NA-MAED HIM NORISU-KE.
HE HATES EXERCISE, BUT HE LO-VES EATING, SO HE'S SUPER FAT...
WANNA SEE THE CAT I GOT BACK THEN? IT'S GOTTEN REALLY FAT!

I WONDER IF SALLY EVENTUALLY BECAME A DIFFERENT CAT?
SOME-THING LIKE REINCAR-NATION?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW, BUT...
I LIKE TO THINK THAT SHE DID.

CHAPTER 10

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU.
SINCE IT'S GRANDMA'S BIRTHDAY, WE WERE THINKING ABOUT EATING OUT TONIGHT.
HAVE YOU BEEN WELL?
YEAH.
DIDN'T YOU ALREADY KNOW, FROM TALKING TO AUNT NANAE?

I GOT A CAKE TO GO!
OH, FOR ME? YOU SH- OULDN'T HAVE.
I'LL MAKE SOME TEA WHEN WE GET HOME, TOO.
SHOULD WE STOP BY THE STORE?
NO, NO.
LET'S JUST GO STRAIGHT HOME.
IT'S NO TROU- BLE.
ALL OF US WANTED TO ENJOY IT AT HOME, TOO.

YOU'VE LOST WEIGHT.
ARE YOU STAYING THE NIGHT?
EVEN THOUGH THIS IS THE HOUSE I GREW UP IN, WE'RE TALKING LIKE STR-ANGERS...

ONE YEAR, MOM...

WAS PREG-NANT.

I WAS SUPP-OSED TO HAVE A LITTLE BROTH-ER.

AHH...

BACK THEN...

IT WASN'T EXACTLY SOMETHING WE WERE EXCITED FOR.

BE-CAUSE IF HE WAS BORN, WOULDN'T MY LIFE CHANGE DRAMATI-CALLY?

AFTER SAHO'S DEATH...

WHAT IF HER SOUL WAS REBORN IN MY LITTLE BROTHER'S BODY?

BUT

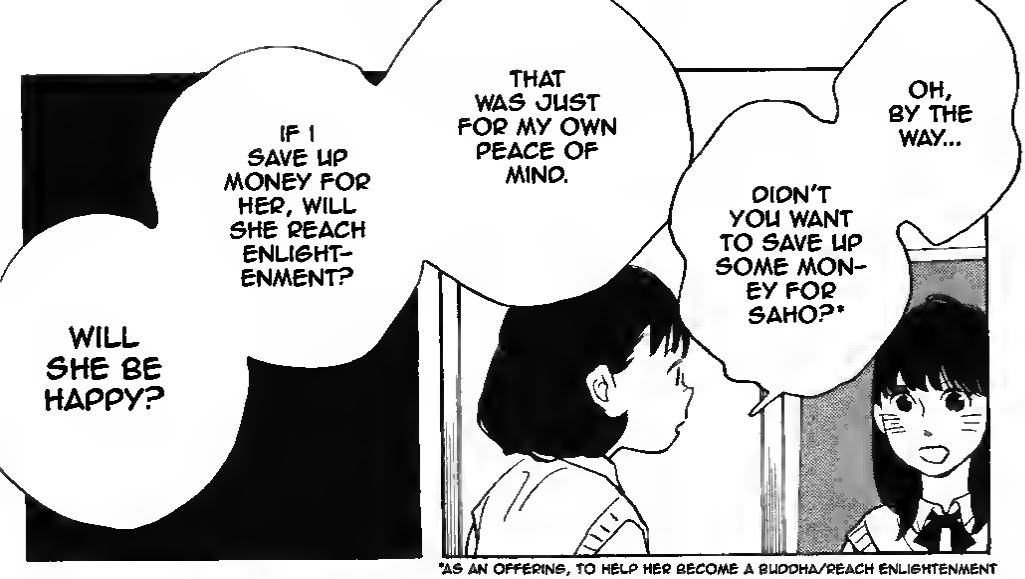
IN THE END

IT WAS A MISCA-RRIAGE.

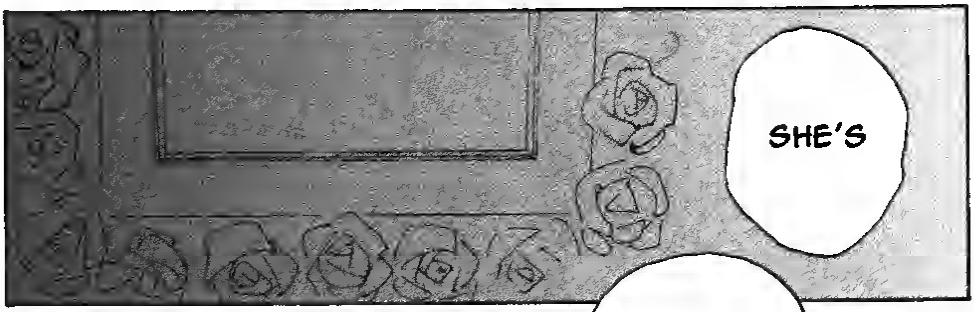
MY LITTLE BROTHER, WHOSE FACE NO ONE EVER SAW, CAN'T EVEN EXIST AS A PHOTO.
SAHO'S PICTURE HAS BEEN PUT UP, BUT...
I WONDER IF SALLY EVENTUALLY BECAME A DIFFERENT CAT?
IS SAHO REALLY STILL THERE?
DID MY BROTHER BECOME A DIFF-ERENT PERSON?
DID SALLY BECOME A DIFF-ERENT CAT?

WHY CAN'T I SEE HER?
OOH, GOOD FOR YOU! PROG-RESS, PROG-RESS!
HOW IS THAT PROG-RESS?
ISN'T TRYING TO REPAIR MY RELATION-SHIP WITH MY FAMILY IS POINTLESS BY NOW?
WELL, BECAUSE YOU'VE AL-WAYS SEEMED TO BE THERE IN BODY, BUT NOT IN SPIRIT.
YOU SEEM LIKE YOU'RE REALLY LIVING NOW.

YOU BELIEVE KUBOTA-SAN, DON'T YOU?
NO, I'M JUST PISSED OFF.
HE'S A SWINDLER! ISN'T IT HIS JOB TO DO THAT!?
NAH. I TOTALLY HATE THAT GUY. IT'S JUST, I WONDER IF HE WOULD REALLY TAKE HIS LIES THAT FAR...
AND BOUGHT A REALLY EX-PENSIVE ONE, LIKE AN IDIOT.
MY FATHER MADE A FUSS ABOUT SAHO'S GRAVE NOT BECOMING "JUST A PLACE FOR DEAD LEAVES AND SADNESS"...
ANY-ONE WHO COULD BE DECEIVED BY THAT MUST BE STUPID.


WILL SHE BE HAPPY?
IF I SAVE UP MONEY FOR HER, WILL SHE REACH ENLIGHT-ENMENT?
THAT WAS JUST FOR MY OWN PEACE OF MIND.
DIDN'T YOU WANT TO SAVE UP SOME MON-EY FOR SAHO?*
OH, BY THE WAY...

*AS AN OFFERING, TO HELP HER BECOME A BUDDHA/REACH ENLIGHTENMENT



THERE, THERE
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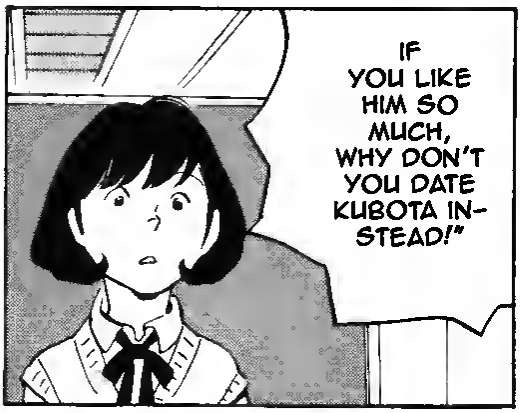
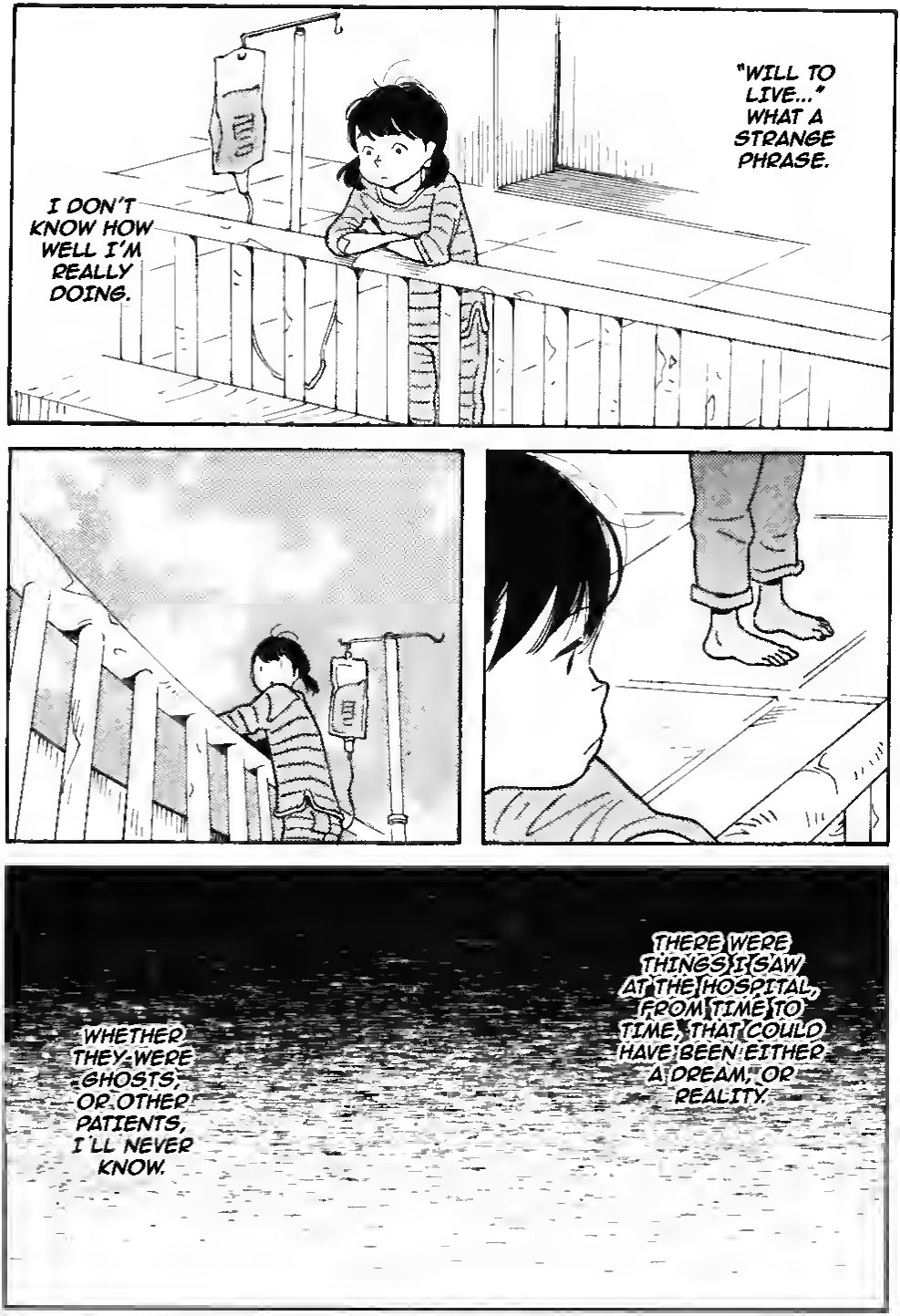
EVEN THOUGH I CALL YOU "MAI-CHAN,"
YOU'VE NEVER CALLED ME "CHIE-CHAN," AFTER ALL THIS TIME!

DON'T TOUCH ME!
YOU SWINDLER GURU!
GURU...?


IF YOU LIKE HIM SO MUCH, WHY DON'T YOU DATE KUBOTA INSTEAD!"

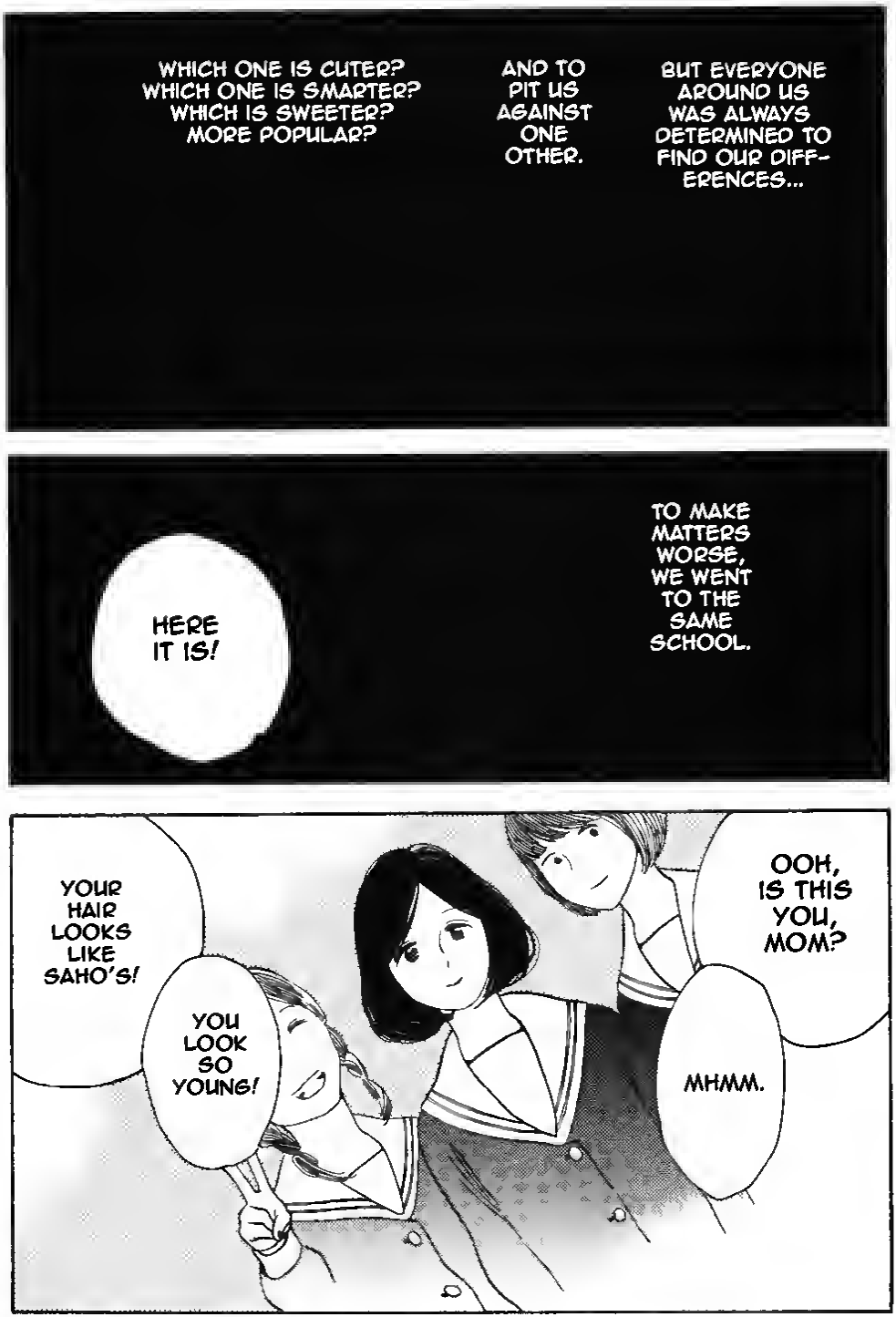
CHIE-CHA-N!
I WAS JUST TOO SHYYY!
THAT'S NOT IT!
I TOOK A BREAK FROM SCHOOL FOR A YEAR, AND WAS HELD BACK.
YOUR WILL TO LIVE IS SENDING SCARING OFF YOUR ILLNESS!
THE FACT THAT I'M HERE NOW... IS PROB-ABLY A MIRACLE.
301
302
303
3
YOU'LL STILL HAVE TO COME BACK FOR CHECK UPS...
BUT KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!
OKAY!


I DON'T KNOW HOW WELL I'M REALLY DOING.
"WILL TO LIVE..." WHAT A STRANGE PHRASE.
THERE WERE THINGS I SAW AT THE HOSPITAL, FROM TIME TO TIME, THAT COULD HAVE BEEN EITHER A DREAM, OR REALITY.
WHETHER THEY WERE GHOSTS, OR OTHER PATIENTS, I'LL NEVER KNOW.

CHIE.

YOU'RE JUST HEARING THINGS.
IT'S JUST WISHFUL THINKING.
THERE YOU GO AGAIN.

FINAL CHAPTER


WHICH ONE IS CUTER? WHICH ONE IS SMARTER? WHICH IS SWEETER? MORE POPULAR?
AND TO PIT US AGAINST ONE OTHER.
BUT EVERYONE AROUND US WAS ALWAYS DETERMINED TO FIND OUR DIFF-ERENCES...
HERE IT IS!
TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, WE WENT TO THE SAME SCHOOL.
YOUR HAIR LOOKS LIKE SAHO'S!
YOU LOOK SO YOUNG!
OOH, IS THIS YOU, MOM?
MHMM.

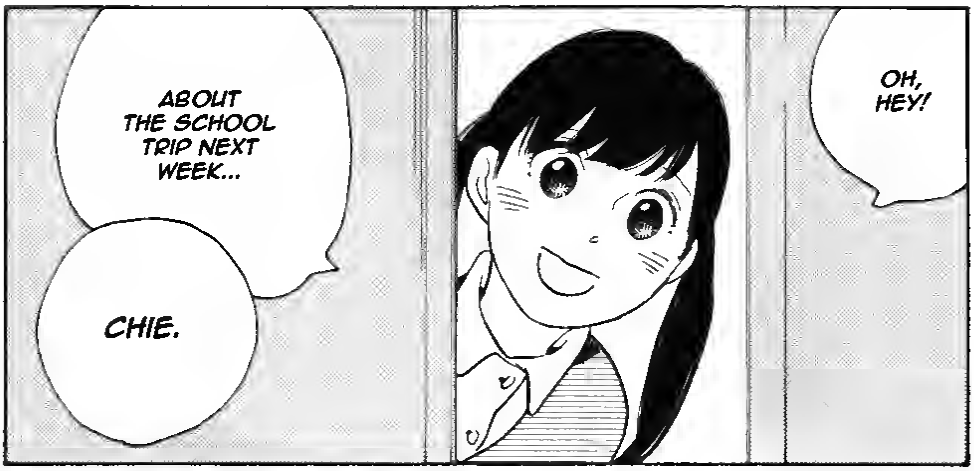
HEY, SAHO. WHAT ARE YOUR GO-ING TO DO?
HMM?
IT'S TRUE.
DO YOU THINK YOU WANT TO GO TO SEIRAN?
SO I THINK IT'D BE NICE TO GO.
YOU'RE GOING, AREN'T YOU, CHIE?
YEAH...
HMM.

AND SHE WAS ALWAYS GOOD AT MAKING FRIENDS, TOO.
HER TEST SCORES WERE ALWAYS JUST A LITTLE BIT HIGHER THAN MINE.
SAHO WAS BETTER THAN ME AT EVERYTHING.
DO YOU NOT WANT TO GO TO SEIRAN?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, CHIE?
SO, SHE PROBABLY DIDN'T MIND AS MUCH AS I DID, BUT...
BASICALLY, I DIDN'T EVER WANT TO BE IN THE SAME PLACE AS HER.

IF YOU READ IN THE DARK LIKE THAT, YOU'LL MESS UP YOUR EYES.
W-... HOW DID YOU KNOW?
TYP-ICAL
BY THE WAY...
I DON'T CARE.
CHIE, IT'S LIKE YOU'RE PSYCHIC!
ALWAYS SEEMED SO MUCH FONDER OF SAHO.
MAYBE THAT'S WHY, SOME-HOW...
MOM, DAD, AND EVERY ADULT...
I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE ANY OF HER EARNEST-NESS.

AH.
OH, I SEE...
SHE'S GOING TO CONFESS TO HIM!
INUI-KUN AND SAHO.
WHOA, THEY'RE BEING PRETTY LOUD.
WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO IF SOMEONE COMES BY?
...I'M SORRY.

THE ONE I LIKE MORE IS CHIE...
POOR SAHO.
CONFESSING YOUR FEELINGS TO SOMEONE TAKES A LOT OF COURAGE.
IT WAS ME THAT HE LIKED.
NOT SAHO, BUT ME.
EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T LIKE INUI-KUN AT ALL...


ABOUT THE SCHOOL TRIP NEXT WEEK...
CHIE.
OH, HEY!

I KNEW.

SORRY, BUT...
I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE TALKING TO YOU TODAY.

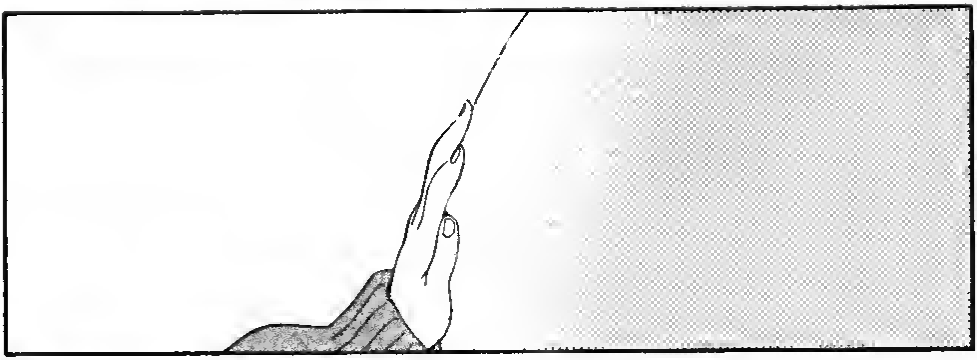
"I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE TALKING TO YOU TODAY."
THERE WERE A LOT OF DAYS WHERE I FELT LIKE THAT, TOO.

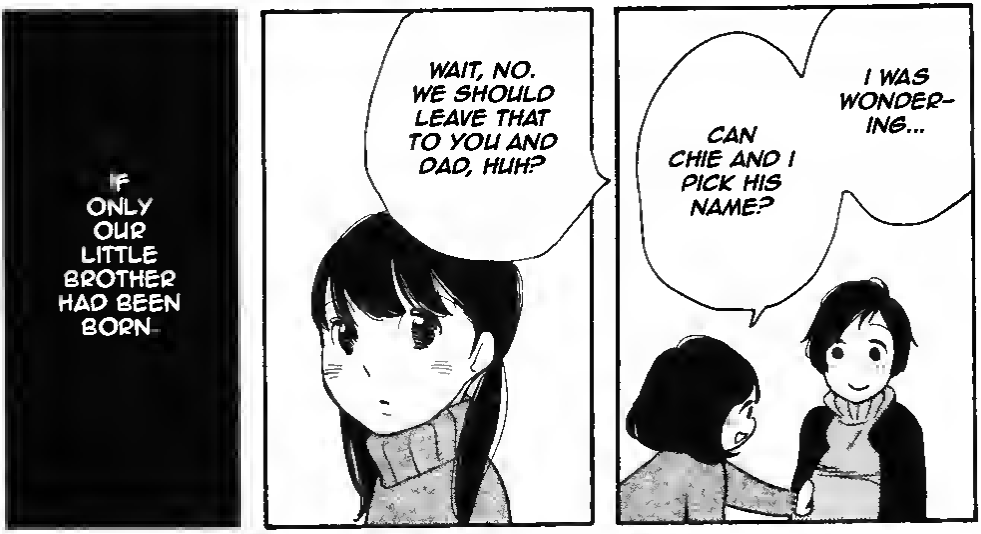
I KNEW THAT THE PERSON SAHO LEAST WANTED TO TALK TO THEN...
WAS ME.

YEP, I KNEW YOU'D BE HERE.
MAI-CHAN, WERE THERE EVER TIMES WHERE YOU HATED YOUR FAMILY?
HUH? WELL, YEAH.
A LOT OF TIMES. LIKE YESTERDAY, ACTUALLY.
WHEN I BECAME ILL, AND WHEN I HAD TO BE ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL...
I REALLY PUT MY FAMILY THROUGH A LOT.
BUT STILL, WHEN I GET ANGRY, I GET ANGRY. SOMETIMES I REALLY BLOW UP AT THEM.
IT DOESN'T MEAN I'M NOT GRATEFUL TO THEM, THOUGH...

BUT, I ALSO LOVED HER.
HATED SAHO.
I REALLY...
REALLY...
I DIDN'T CRY.
WHEN SHE DIED...
EVEN THOUGH I LOVED HER...
AND I WASN'T GOOD AT GETTING ATTENTION LIKE SHE WAS, EITHER...
I COULDN'T SMILE EASILY LIKE SAHO COULD.
JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T CRY, THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE NOT SAD.

ONE TIME, MOM...
YOU KNOW...
IF I'M BEING HONEST, I THINK SAHO IS MUCH CUTER THAN CHIE
MIGHT SAY SOME-THING LIKE THAT... I WORRIED.




I WAS WONDER-ING...
CAN CHIE AND I PICK HIS NAME?
WAIT, NO. WE SHOULD LEAVE THAT TO YOU AND DAD, HUH?
IF ONLY OUR LITTLE BROTHER HAD BEEN BORN

WOULD HAVE FINALLY BEEN EQUAL.
SAHO AND I...
I DON'T THINK THAT AT ALL.
YOU MUST THINK I'M SO STUPID.
I WAS A LITTLE RELIEVED THAT SHE DIED.
WHEN I REALIZED THAT IT MEANT THERE WOULD BE NO REASON TO COMPARE US ANYMORE...

ISN'T THAT CRUEL?
I'M HEARTLESS.
THAT'S WHY I HAVE NO SENSE OF SELF, WHY I'M ALWAYS FOLLOWING SAHO'S SHADOW TO MAKE MYSELF FEEL BETTER.
IT'S ALL A PRETENSE.
I WAS WRAPPED UP IN THE DELUSION OF BEING A DEVOTED OLDER SISTER.
OR, THAT IS TO SAY...
I WANT TO BE WRAPPED UP IN IT.

I'M CRUEL TOO, YOU KNOW.
WHILE I WAS LISTENING TO YOU TALK...
MY MOUTH WAS HANGING WIDE OPEN, LIKE, "WOOOW!"
YOU'RE SWEET.
I AM NOT!
THAT'S AWFULLY SHITTY, HUH?
NO.
I WAS ADMIRING HOW DRAMATIC THE MISFORTUNES OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL ARE.

I WONDER IF IT'S BECAUSE I'M A YEAR OLDER...?

HANAWA-SAN, YOU SURE DO MAKE ME WANT TO DOTE ON YOU.

W-
WELL...
BUT YOU STILL WON'T CALL ME "CHIE-CHAN"...

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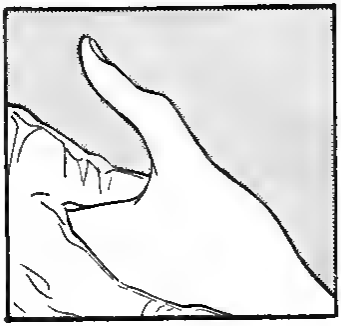
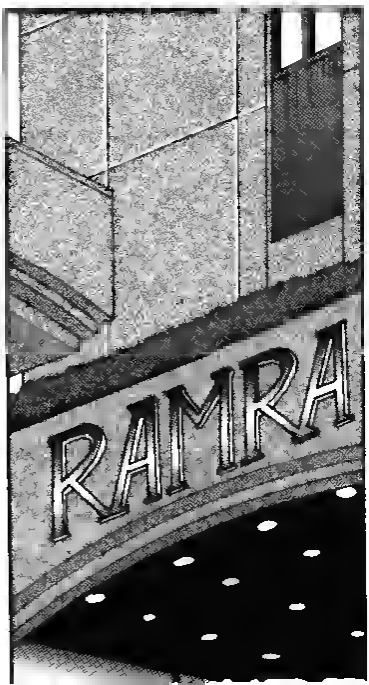
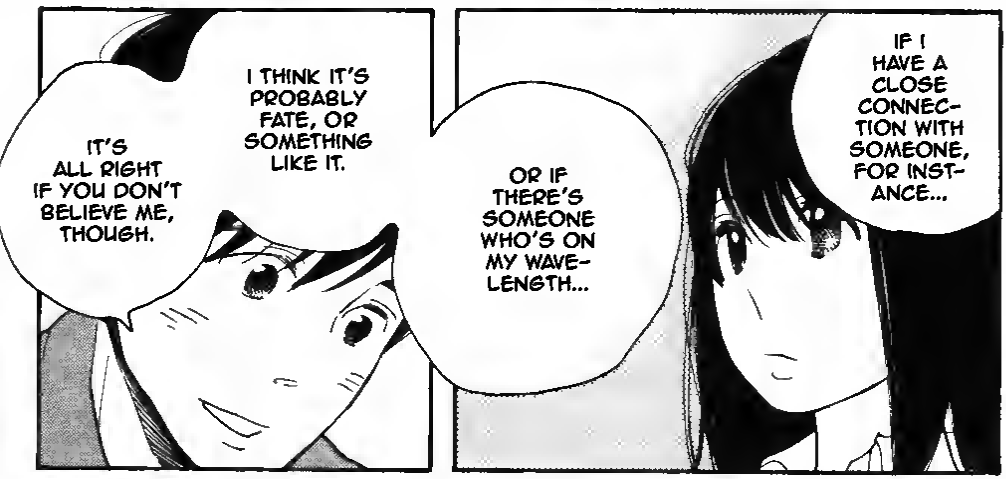
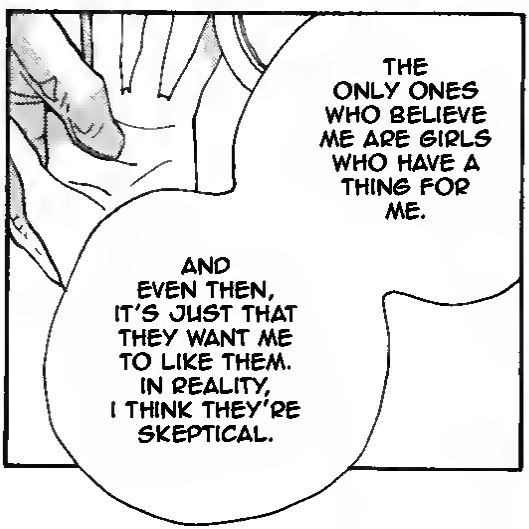


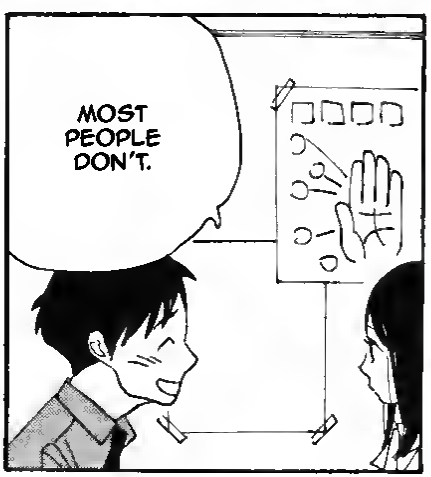
OKAY.
I'M GOING TO GO LOOK AT SOME BOOKS.


RAMRA

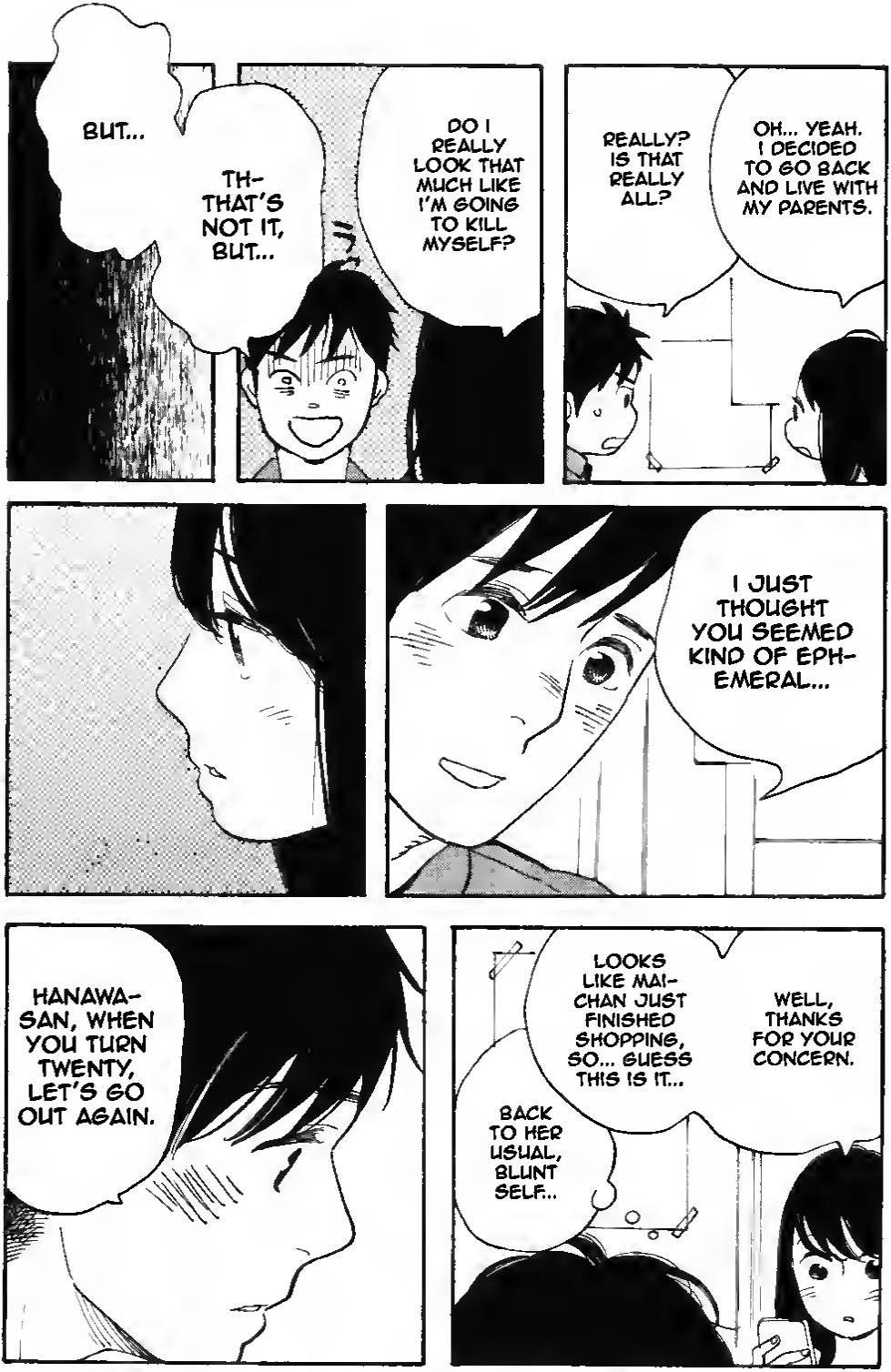
KUBOTA-SAN, CAN YOU SEE ANYONE WHO'S DEAD?
NAH.
NOT EVERY-ONE.


IF I HAVE A CLOSE CONNEC-TION WITH SOMEONE, FOR INST-ANCE...
OR IF THERE'S SOMEONE WHO'S ON MY WAVE-LENGTH...
I THINK IT'S PROBABLY FATE, OR SOMETHING LIKE IT.
IT'S ALL RIGHT IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, THOUGH.


THE ONLY ONES WHO BELIEVE ME ARE GIRLS WHO HAVE A THING FOR ME.
AND EVEN THEN, IT'S JUST THAT THEY WANT ME TO LIKE THEM. IN REALITY, I THINK THEY'RE SKEPTICAL.

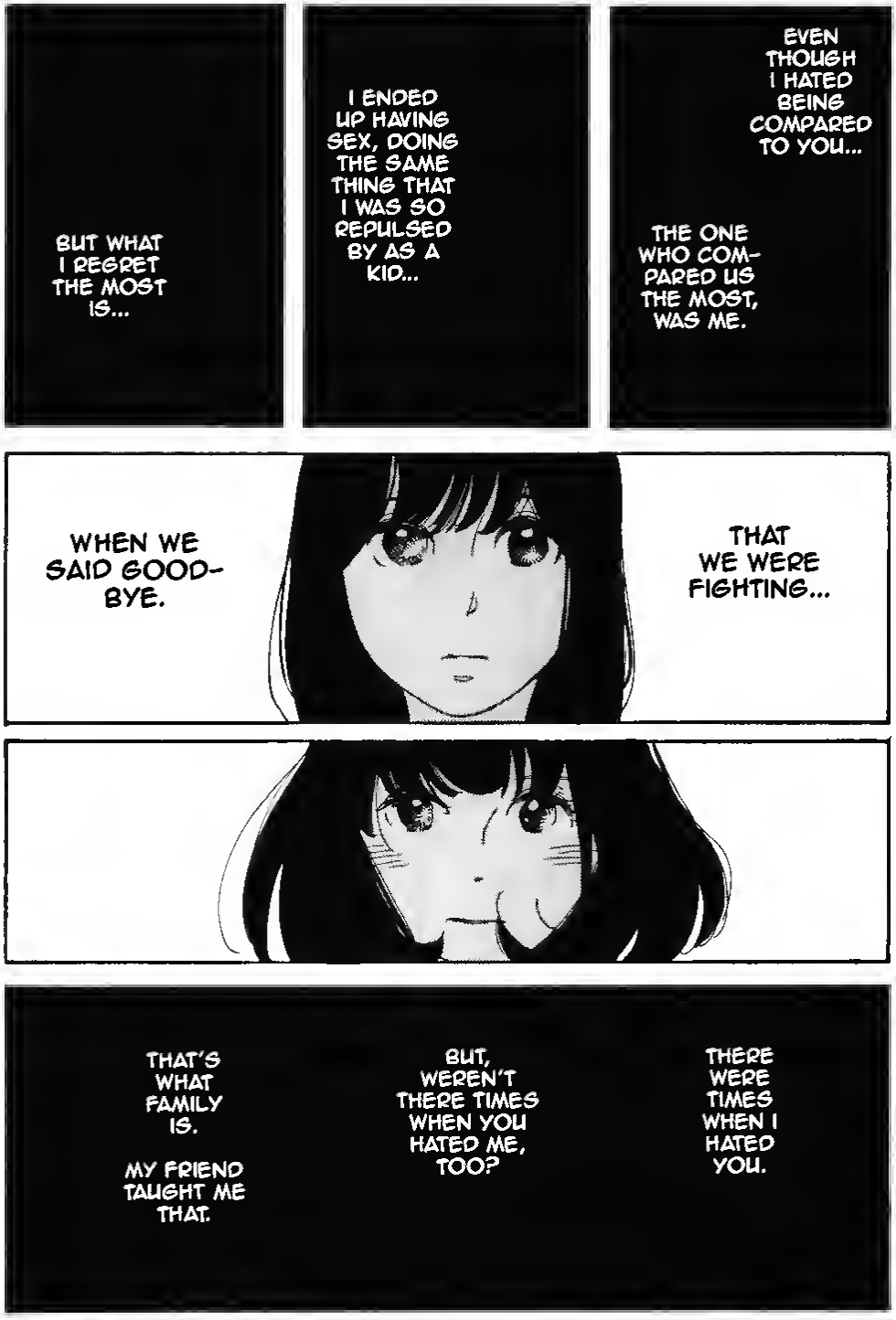

MOST PEOPLE DON'T.

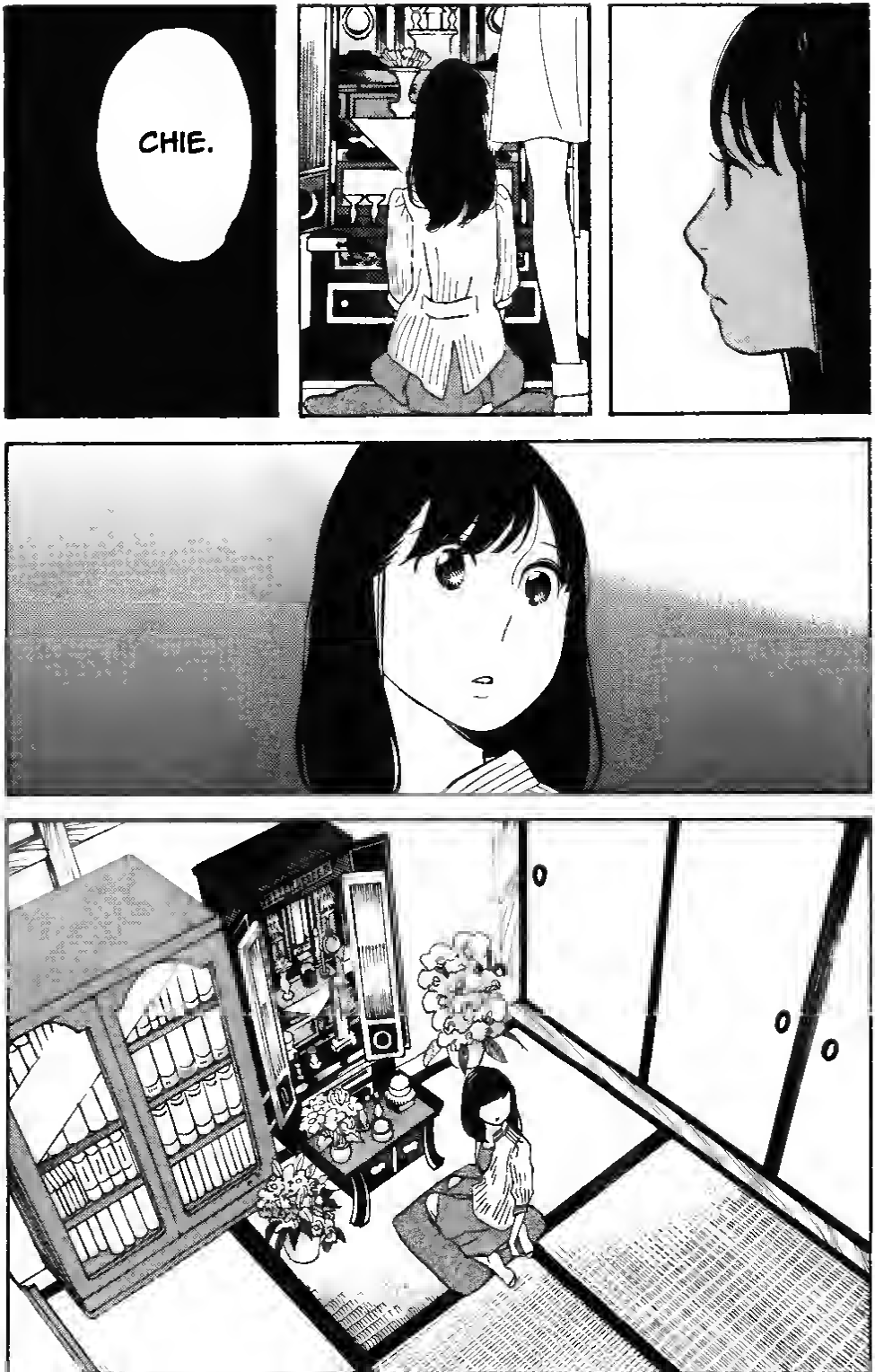
YOU KNOW, I DID REALLY LIKE HAV-ING SEX WITH YOU, KUBOTA-SAN.
HUUUH?
OKAY. THEN FROM NOW ON, I WON'T BE-LIEVE YOU, EITHER.
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IN SLEEPING AROUND.
Y-YEAH. I UNDER-STAND.
WAIT.
SOME-THING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.
ARE YOU... GOING SOME-WHERE?

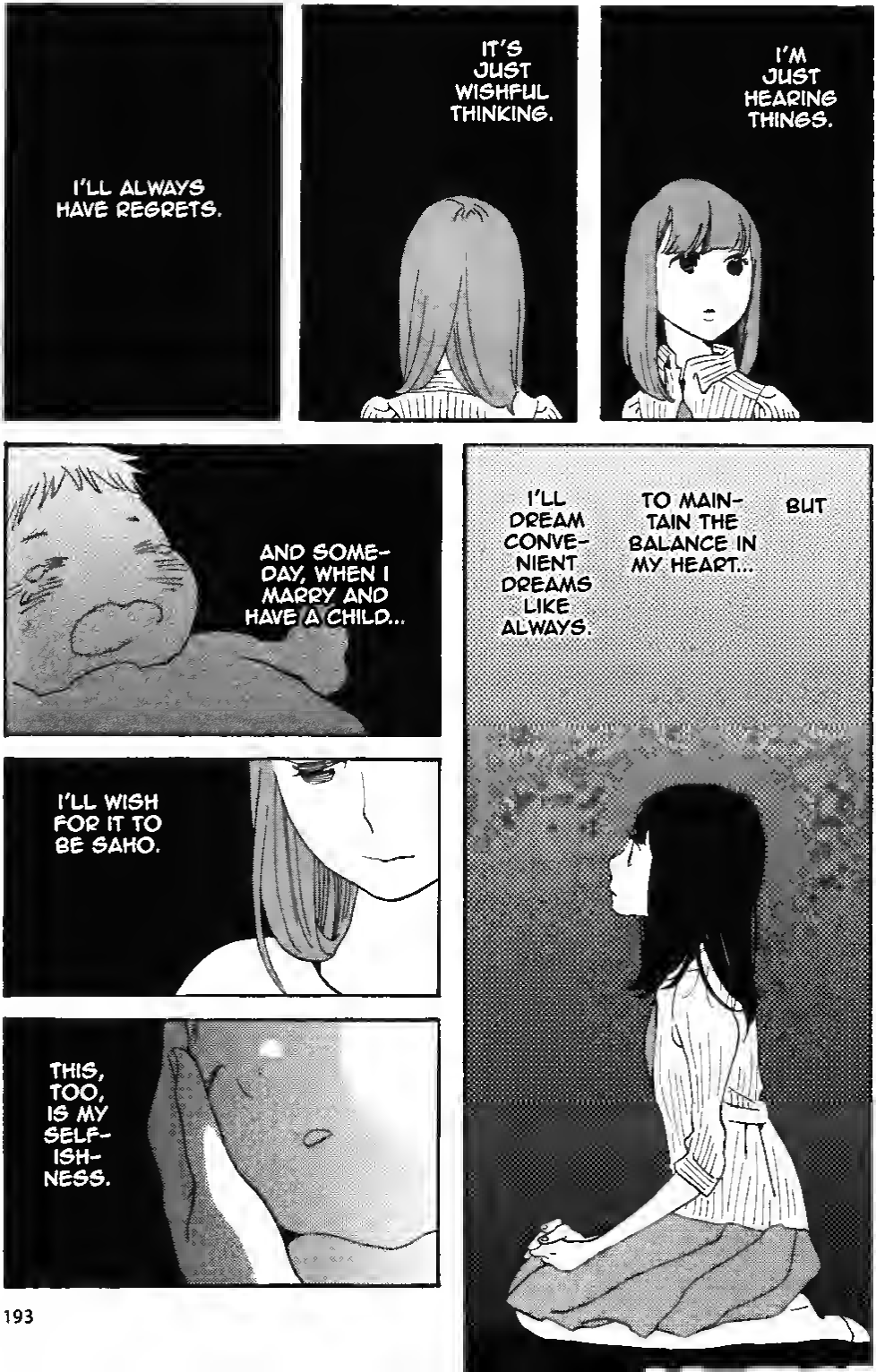

BUT...
TH-THAT'S NOT IT, BUT...
DO I REALLY LOOK THAT MUCH LIKE I'M GOING TO KILL MYSELF?
REALLY? IS THAT REALLY ALL?
OH... YEAH. I DECIDED TO GO BACK AND LIVE WITH MY PARENTS.
I JUST THOUGHT YOU SEEMED KIND OF EPH-EMERAL...
HANAWA-SAN, WHEN YOU TURN TWENTY, LET'S GO OUT AGAIN.
LOOKS LIKE MAI-CHAN JUST FINISHED SHOPPING, SO... GUESS THIS IS IT...
WELL, THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN.
BACK TO HER USUAL, BLUNT SELF...

AAA AAAAAA AAAAH I'M NOT LISTEN-INGGG?
BUT WE WERE NEVER REALLY GOING OUT IN THE ST PLACE, MEMBER?
AGAIN...?
WELL, I'LL MISS YOU, BUT CHEERS TO LEAVING THE NEST!
CAN WE REALLY CALL IT "LEAVING THE NEST"
IF I'M GOING BACK TO LIVE WITH MY PA-RENTS?
EVEN SUICIDE?
YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO, CHIE.
WELL, THAT'S JUST AS WELL.
I MIGHT BE LEAVING THE NEST SOON AGAIN WHEN I GO TO COLLEGE.

I WON'T TELL THAT MORBID JOKE AGAIN...
HEY, I'M SORRY, ALL RIGHT?
SOME-ONE TOLD ME TODAY THAT I LOOKED LIKE I WAS DYING, SO...
SORRY...
SO I JUST... I THOUGHT I COULD UNDERSTAND YOUR FEEL-INGS A LITTLE.
I WAS THE OUT-CAST OF THE FAMILY, TOO...
SAHO...
I WASN'T A GOOD SISTER TO YOU AT ALL...


BUT WHAT I REGRET THE MOST IS...
I ENDED UP HAVING SEX, DOING THE SAME THING THAT I WAS SO REPULSED BY AS A KID...
EVEN THOUGH I HATED BEING COMPARED TO YOU...
THE ONE WHO COMPARED US THE MOST, WAS ME.
WHEN WE SAID GOOD-BYE.
THAT WE WERE FIGHTING...
THAT'S WHAT FAMILY IS.
MY FRIEND TAUGHT ME THAT.
BUT, WEREN'T THERE TIMES WHEN YOU HATED ME, TOO?
THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I HATED YOU.


CHIE.


I'LL ALWAYS HAVE REGRETS.
IT'S JUST WISHFUL THINKING.
I'M JUST HEARING THINGS.
AND SOMEDAY, WHEN I MARRY AND HAVE A CHILD...
I'LL WISH FOR IT TO BE SAHO.
THIS, TOO, IS MY SELFISHNESS.
I'LL DREAM CONVENIENT DREAMS LIKE ALWAYS.
TO MAINTAIN THE BALANCE IN MY HEART...
BUT

AND I'M ONLY ME.
AND OUR LITTLE BROTHER IS OUR LITTLE BROTHER...
BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, SAHO IS SAHO.
I REALLY AM AN AWFUL OLDER SISTER, AREN'T I?
CHIEEE!
I'LL ASK HIM NEXT TIME.
SAHO, IF YOU'RE ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH AS KUBOTA-SAN, DOES THAT MEAN YOU'RE NOT ALONE?
I'M GOING SHOPPING. WANT TO COME?

わがままちえちゃん

完

THE END